# *Studies in Colluthus'* Abduction of Helen

COSETTA CADAU

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Studies in Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*

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# Studies in Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*

*By*

Cosetta Cadau

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# Preface

The only extant work of Colluthus, an Egyptian epic poet from the late fifth century AD, is an epyllion in 394 hexameters entitled *The Abduction of Helen*. His poem has been interpreted as a product of late-antique rhetorical affectation and stagnation, lacking in vigour and originality. The objective of this book is to situate Colluthus within his cultural, literary and philosophical context and to provide a new appraisal of his work employing current interpretative perspectives. This research also identifies new models (notably Claudian) and assesses the influence of contemporary education, genres and art forms on the poem.

This book is the result of a research work which began in 2009 with my Ph.D.; I have been privileged to be awarded a Postgraduate Research Grant ('Master and Back') by the Region of Sardinia to complete this work.

The research for this book was conducted primarily at the Department of Classics in Trinity College, Dublin, under the supervision of Dr Martine Cuypers, whose expertise in Greek literature, continuous encouragement and support has guided this project throughout its five years of gestation. I would like to thank everyone in the Department for their academic advice, constant interest and invaluable feedback.

I am greatly indebted to Dr Laura Miguélez-Cavero of the University of Oxford, to Professor Gianfranco Agosti of The Sapienza University of Rome, and to Dr Fiona Haarer of King's College London for reading and revising notes, preventing me from making many mistakes, for their help with late-antique bibliography, and for their tireless guidance and support throughout the research process. I apologise for the mistakes that I have still managed to make: they are entirely my own.

I wish to dedicate this book to Oran, my endless source of encouragement.

*Cosetta Cadau*
*Dublin, February 2015*

# Conventions and Abbreviations

1. All editions of Colluthus used in this work are listed in the bibliography. Livrea 1968a, Orsini 1972 and Mair 1928 have been systematically consulted. Quotations primarily follow Mair 1928 but alternative readings and conjectures from other sources are noted as appropriate.
2. All translations are my own except where otherwise stated.
3. Abbreviations for classical authors follow the conventions of LSJ, but some have been expanded (e.g. 'Aesch.' instead of 'A.', 'Ap. Rh.' instead of 'A.R.').
4. Abbreviations for journals follow the conventions of *L'Année Philologique*.
5. Abbreviations for collections of texts and works of reference:

   *LIMC* H.C. Ackermann and J.R. Giseler (eds.), *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zürich 1981–2009).

   *LSJ* H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, rev. by H.S. Jones and R. Mackenzie, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford$^9$ 1996).

   *PMG* D.L. Page (ed.), *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford 1962).

   *RE* A. Pauly and G. Wissowa (eds.), *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart 1894–1980).

# Introduction

Non-specialists will find little to entice them to read the *Abduction of Helen*, an epyllion by the late-fifth-century-AD Egyptian poet Colluthus. The English translation in Mair's Loeb edition (1928), replacing the version of Sherburne (1651, sic), is by now outdated. The Italian edition of De Lorenzi (1943 and 1946) maintains some now untenable theories about the unoriginality of the proem, as argued by Livrea (1968a and 1968b) and later by Orsini in his sparsely annotated Budé edition (1972). More recently, Fernández-Galiano published a more up-to-date translation in Spanish (1987), but without a commentary. The editions by Cuartero i Iborra (1992) and by Schönberger (1993) are equally limited: the former includes a translation in Catalan and useful notes, and the latter offers a new translation in German and comprehensive annotations,[1] but neither provides a modern approach to interpretation.

Livrea's edition offers the only full commentary on the poem to date,[2] but this is largely restricted to philological matters and makes no attempt to elucidate the poem's place in the literary tradition and its relationship with, for example, the novel, rhetoric and the output of other late-antique hexameter works. Orsini includes an introduction which highlights some of Colluthus' models, but makes no serious attempt to interpret the text as a whole or to link it to the cultural background of the late fifth century AD. A long debate[3] was spurred by the publication of Livrea's edition, in which Giangrande (1969) first read Colluthus' poem through the lens of irony.[4] Although Livrea (esp. 1991) dismantled some of Giangrande's re-evaluation of our poet as anachronistic, the general thrust of his interpretation has unquestionably led the way to a new reading of the *Abduction*.[5]

Studies of Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* were limited to a handful of articles until recently: scholars have been interested in Colluthus' metre (Minniti-Colonna 1979, Nardelli 1982), and in his re-elaboration of epic models (James 1969 and 1981, Giangrande 1975), but little effort has been made to contextualise

1 However, this edition has not been well-received (see Schenkeveld 1996).

2 Kotseleni 1990 follows Livrea and makes modest contributions to the discussion.

3 For a summary, see Magnelli 2008, 151 and Paschalis 2008, 136.

4 See Magnelli 2008, 166 and Paschalis 2008, 147.

5 Livrea 1991, 561–2 revisits the passages that Giangrande had reinterpreted in an allusive way and re-establishes his position (already set out in his edition of 1968) that Colluthus did not reach the poetic quality of Nonnus, whom he passively recycled. Giangrande responded again in 1974 and 1975a, but these papers add little to the discussion.

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the poem by looking at contemporary literature (the Christian tradition, panegyric, epic poetry, theatrical performances, ekphrasis and rhetorical works) or by considering the possible relevance of its cultural, religious and philosophical background.

In recent years, however, Colluthus has attracted more scholarly attention: Palmisciano (1995) worked on the role of persuasion within the epyllion, followed by Rocca (1995) and Williams (2001); Hollis (2006) and Ambühl (2010) contributed to an understanding of the criteria employed by the poet in choosing his sources and models; and Harries (2006) read Paris' role within the epyllion as symbolising the end of the pastoral era. New models have begun to be identified, for instance for Colluthus' description of Aphrodite's hair (Matthews 1996 and Livrea 2000). In a 2008 fascicle of *Ramus* focussing on later Greek poetry, Magnelli, Paschalis and Prauscello made a significant contribution towards an understanding of the relationship between Colluthus' epyllion and other literary genres. Disappointingly, Brill's *Companion to Greek and Latin "Epyllion" and Its Reception* (2012), edited by Baumbach and Bär, does not include a paper on Colluthus.

Against this background, my work aims to provide a series of studies of Colluthus' epyllion that situate his poem within its socio-historical and literary context, and that explain his engagement with contemporary and earlier literature and ideas. No previous attempt has been made to reconcile the Egyptian-Christian context of the poet with his work in Greek about classical and pagan topics. Until recent years Colluthus has been interpreted as a classicising poet who wrote about pagan topics in late-fifth-century Egypt. This reading is limited and superficial as it does not take into account that Colluthus composed in a heavily Christianised intellectual context, in which Neoplatonism also played a key role.

My objective is to contextualise Colluthus' work and to investigate whether it is possible to see late-antique Egypt in his poem. Some of the relevant questions are whether he writes about topics and in modes that were current at the time, whether he shares his contemporaries' literary and artistic tastes and cultural preoccupations, whether he is familiar with the works of contemporary poets, whether he engages with them on a linguistic level, and how he interacts with his educated audience. The answers to these questions are not always straightforward, as we are dealing with a complex environment: many cultures and languages coexisted in the Thebaid at the time, and late poetry is by nature the complex product of centuries of literary tradition, canon formation and renegotiation. Fresh interpretations are found in the approaches to previous material; therefore, as methodologies for my research I employ intertextuality as well as analysis of narrative techniques, focussing especially on contemporary models.

The first step in contextualising Colluthus' poem is to reconstruct the historical and cultural environment in which the poet was active, the Egyptian Thebaid under the Emperor Anastasius, with his contemporary fellow poets, some of whom held positions within the imperial court and composed literature on commission. This is the aim of my first chapter ("Colluthus in His Context"), in which I also consider the role played in late antiquity by rhetoric, performance and poetry, and how these constituted the foundation of any individual's preparation to become a public speaker or an intellectual. At the end of the chapter, I examine the features of the so-called epyllion tradition to assess Colluthus' place within it.[6] This analysis shows that, while the *Abduction* conforms to the time-honoured conventions of short narrative poetry, it also embraces other elements and features that connect the poem closely to the literary models and manners of the time.

Models and genres that Colluthus employed in selected scenes, namely the proem and the characterisations of Paris, Eris and Aphrodite, are surveyed in the second chapter ("Colluthus and His Models"). Contemporary and previously unidentified models such as Christodorus, Musaeus and Claudian are assessed here, with particular focus on Neoplatonically inspired poems such as Claudian's *Gigantomachy* and the work of Christodorus that survives as Book 2 of the *Anthologia Palatina*. My argument is that Colluthus was not slavishly following in the footsteps of his predecessors and peers, but that he employed the tradition creatively to suit his own objectives, for example, to proclaim his poetics and to surprise the expectations of his late-fifth-century-AD audience. A close reading of selected passages reveals that Colluthus' poem reflects genres that were highly popular in his time (such as invective) and that rhetorical exercises such as ethopoiiai have also left a clear mark.

This raises interesting questions regarding the performative dimension of late antique epic in general and the *Abduction of Helen* in particular, which I discuss in my third chapter ("Colluthus' Visual Epyllion"). Here I focus on the visual impact of the poem, arguing that it is structured as a series of picturesque scenes. Proceeding from a survey of visuality in late-antique literature to a philological analysis of visual terminology in Colluthus' epyllion, I argue that the *Abduction* reflects the hunger for visuality which is typical of late antiquity, in the form of influences of the figurative arts, the ekphrastic tradition, public speaking and theatrical performances. In this chapter I also explore the possibility that these influences may suggest an alternative occasion for Colluthus'

6 Baumbach and Bär 2012a, xiv–xv highlight the downfall of content-centred criteria, which excluded Colluthus' and Triphiodorus' texts from the epyllion tradition because of their cyclic themes.

epyllion, in the context of pantomimic performances, the popularity of which under Anastasius is also assessed.

Chapter four ("Colluthus' Polyphonic Epyllion") surveys some of the narrative devices employed by Colluthus and seeks to explain why he presents his story as he does. I consider whether notable techniques employed by Colluthus occur in his models and, where they do, I compare their objectives. Addresses to the audience and other narrative devices break the fiction of the narration and disclose the mediation of Colluthus the narrator. I argue that this and other narrative features contribute to achieving the twofold objective of enhancing the theatricality of the epyllion and allowing the author to engage closely with his audience in evaluations of his characters.

The exploitation of traditional models and narrative techniques to suit (and thwart) the expectations of a late-fifth-century-AD audience, the obsession with visuality, the influence of other contemporary art forms such as ekphrasis and performance, the training received by scholars and public speakers are all elements that need to be considered if one is to fully understand the significance of the *Abduction of Helen* as a literary and cultural artefact in its historical context. In my conclusion, I examine the wider implications of these factors for late-antique epic (for instance, the role of Latin models and of Neoplatonism), focussing especially on aspects which may provide further insight into Colluthus as a poet under Anastasius but which cannot be explored in full in this work.

CHAPTER 1

# Colluthus in His Context

As a poet of the late fifth century AD, Colluthus fits in with the late-antique literary context, and his poetry features the characteristics also shared by contemporary poets. Much attention has been devoted to date to the re-elaboration of epic tradition as a means to demonstrate his alleged lack of originality, but no attempt to contextualise has been made. This exercise leads to a better understanding of the literary taste of the time, and how models were employed to achieve originality not necessarily through content.

## 1 Colluthus' Life

The information available on Colluthus is scarce. The *Suda* (κ1951) lists him as follows:

> Κόλουθος· Λυκοπολίτης, Θηβαῖος, ἐποποιός, γεγονὼς ἐπὶ τῶν χρόνων βασιλέως Ἀναστασίου. ἔγραψε Καλυδωνιακὰ ἐν βιβλίοις ἓξ καὶ ἐγκώμια δι' ἐπῶν καὶ Περσικά.
>
> Colluthus, from Lycopolis, in the Thebaid, epic poet, who flourished during the time of emperor Anastasius. He wrote *Calydoniaca* in six books, encomia in hexameters, and *Persica*

Another βίος of Colluthus, included in codex Ambrosianus Q. 5 (gr. 661), and the ὑπόθεσις included in other manuscripts, depend directly on the *Suda*. The spelling of the poet's name has been subject to discussion.[1] The *Suda* and the Ambrosianus give it as Κόλουθος but other manuscripts[2] write Κολλούθος, which has generally been preferred by scholars[3] on the basis of papyri, *ostraka* and other evidence.[4]

1 For a comprehensive summary, see Schneider 1866, 404.
2 Livrea 1968a, XI.
3 Unger 1841, XVIII; Bernhardy 1877$^3$, 401; Parthy 1864, 48.
4 For example, *P. Oxy*. 20.2245.4; for further instances, see Livrea 1968a, XI n. 2.

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Lycopolis, a semi-Hellenised city on the western coast of the Nile, in the Thebaid region of Egypt, was about 100 km north[5] of Panopolis (the hometown of Nonnus, Cyrus and Pamprepius, and a centre of Hellenic culture since Herodotus' times),[6] and is today called Assiout or Asyut. Its location at a crossing-point for caravans through the Libyan Desert[7] made Lycopolis a wealthy town, and it enjoyed a certain cultural reputation, since it is defined as λαμπροτάτη in a papyrus from 569 AD[8] and its inhabitants are called εὐλυκοπολῖται in a slightly later text.[9] It was also the hometown of Neoplatonic philosopher Plotinus (205–70 AD), as well as of preeminent Christian leaders such as Alexander and St John of Lycopolis. Alexander of Lycopolis, active in the fourth century AD, wrote a well-known treatise against the Manichæans, and was Bishop of Lycopolis,[10] while St John of Lycopolis, his contemporary, led a hermit life near the town, and was renowned for his spiritual gifts and admired by later saints. The Thebaid itself was considered the cradle of monasticism.[11] Triphiodorus—dated by some scholars to the late third century, by others to the late fifth century AD—is also believed to come from this area.[12] There can be no doubt about the existence of an established Hellenic tradition among the intellectuals of the northeastern regions of Africa in the late-antique period.[13]

Colluthus reached his ἀκμή during Anastasius' reign, between 491 and 518. Orsini, De Lorenzi and Mair agree on this meaning for the γεγονώς of the *Suda*.[14] If we accept that most poets between the fourth and the sixth century wrote their main works when they were in their thirties,[15] we may tentatively place

5 Its geographical location is clarified by Ptolem. 4.5.62–3, *Itin. Anton.* 157, Cusis *M.P.* 24, Lyco *M.P.* 36, Hier. *Synecd.* 731, Steph. Byz. *s.v.* Λυκόπολις *Tabula Peutingeriana* ed. Dejardins, Segm. 8 B.2; Λυκοπολίτης appears in Strab. 17.1.40, Plut. *Isid.* 72, Clem. *Protr.* 34.7, *Suda s.v.* Πλωτῖνος.

6 Her. *Hist.* 2.91; see Hernández de la Fuente 2004, 400.

7 Orsini 1972, v.

8 *P. Cair. Masp.* 2.67163.8 and 3.67309.6.

9 *P. Cair. Masp.* 1.67068.

10 According to Photius (*Contra Manichæos*, i, 11), Alexander was already a Christian when he composed this work, but according to Bardenhewer 1894, 234 he was a pagan and a Platonist.

11 Hernández de la Fuente 2004, 397.

12 Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 13–14 also summarises the matter of Triphiodorus' debated dating.

13 Alesso 2002, 19.

14 Based on Rohde 1878, 163 and 219.

15 Some examples: Pamprepius, born in 440, wrote the Ἰσαυρικά about events of 476, between 476 and 484 (the date of his death), thus at a time when he was 36 to 44 years of

Colluthus' year of birth between circa 460 and 470. Since Anastasius' reign lasted 27 years, if we assume that Colluthus was alive for the full duration of the emperor's rule (if Colluthus was dead at the time when the *Suda* was compiled, the compiler would presumably have recorded it), the *terminus post quem* should be around 460: if we go by this assumption, the poet would have been 31 years of age in 491. An earlier year of birth seems less likely, based on the fact that, if we assume that Colluthus was much older than 31 at the beginning of Anastasius' reign, the *Suda* probably would not have referred to his ἀκμή.

In a detailed study, Schwabe used the similarities in the language of Musaeus, Nonnus and Colluthus to date Musaeus to the fifth century AD, thus earlier than Colluthus. Musaeus' influence on Colluthus, discussed *infra* in this volume, corroborates this position, and yet scholarship was not unanimous on this dating.[16]

None of the works by Colluthus mentioned in the *Suda* has survived. The topic of the *Calydoniaca* was the myth of Meleager and the Calydonian boar hunt, on which Triphiodorus also wrote a *Marathoniaca*, according to the *Suda*. Livrea[17] suggested that there may be an indirect reference to this work at lines 47–8 of the *Abduction of Helen*, the model of which is *Il.* 9.568–81, where Meleager's mother shakes the ground invoking a punishment for her son from Hades and Persephone. Although we do not possess any information regarding the subject of Colluthus' encomia, we may presume that they revolved around Anastasius, given that the emperor's military achievements were also the topic of the *Persica*. This work was probably centred on Anastasius' victory over the Persians in 506.[18]

The only work by Colluthus that has survived is the *Abduction of Helen* (Ἁρπαγὴ Ἑλένης),[19] which is not mentioned in the *Suda*. The question as to why the *Suda* does not mention the epyllion has led to a number of hypotheses over the centuries. Van Lennep, for example, long ago suggested that two

age; Olympiodorus of Thebes, born in 380, published his historical work in 440, when he was 40 years of age.

16 Schwabe 1876. However, Minniti Colonna 1976, 65 disagreed with the presumed precedence of Musaeus versus Colluthus, although no new arguments are presented in support of this view. See also Criscuolo 1978, 212, and Migotto 1992, XXX.

17 Livrea 1968a, XII n. 5.

18 Cameron 1982, 236–7.

19 Some manuscripts have Ἁρπαγὴ τῆς Ἑλένης, but Livrea 1968a, XII n. 6 rejects this form as Colluthus in his poem never uses the article with proper names, with the only exception of 284 ὁ δὲ Δάρδανος ἐκ Διὸς ἦεν, which is justified by the model, Φ 189 ὁ δ' ἄρ'Αἰακὸς ἐκ Διὸς ἦεν.

poets named Colluthus existed.[20] Later, a secondary debate arose regarding whether the poet Colluthus was the same person as the fourth-century martyr Colluthus (ἅγιος μάρτυς Κόλλουθος) who is mentioned in the *Historia Lausiaca* by Palladius of Galatia, bishop of Helenopolis in Bithynia.[21] De Lorenzi[22] suggested that the *Abduction of Helen* is merely a fragment of a much larger poem entitled *Antehomerica*, which the poet would have left unfinished at the time of his death, and which was subsequently published by a scholar, prefaced with an apocryphal proem. This theory is dismantled by Livrea,[23] who ultimately embraces the dating of Weinberger,[24] according to whom the *Onomatologos*, one of the sources of the *Suda* and the work of Hesychius of Miletus (a contemporary of Colluthus), was published before the *Abduction of Helen*. This would imply that the *Abduction* must be dated after the *Calydoniaca*, the *Encomia* and the *Persica*. However, it is worth noting that the information provided by the *Suda* should always be approached cautiously due to the many challenges it presents.[25]

## 2 Literary Culture at the Time of Anastasius

Colluthus lived under Anastasius I, who reigned between 491 and 518.[26] This time saw a number of external conflicts[27] and reforms (see below), but also a vast and variegated literary production.

20 Lennep 1747, XIX.

21 Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* p. 154.9 Butler. Written in 419–420 at the request of Lausus, chamberlain at the court of the Theodosius II, this influential work reports on the "Desert Fathers", early Christian monks who lived in the Egyptian desert, where Palladius had travelled to meet them in person.

22 De Lorenzi 1929, 39–40.

23 Livrea 1968, XX; Criscuolo 1978, 212.

24 Weinberger 1930, 1473–5; Livrea 1968a, XIII–XIV.

25 E.g.: there is no entry for Nonnus; there are two entries for Triphiodorus (T 1111–1112) and four for Musaeus (M 1294–1297), leading to problems regarding the identification of the poets.

26 He succeeded Zeno (474–491), and was succeeded by Justin (518–527) and Justinian (527–565). See Allen and Jeffreys 1996; Swain and Edwards 2004; Bagnall 1993 and 2007; Haas 1997; Nicks 2000; Haarer 2006; Agosti 2012.

27 The war against Sassanid Persia (502–506), the invasion of the Balkan provinces by Slavs and Bulgars, the African war and the Isaurian war (492–497), all of which are covered by Procopius' *De Bellis*; Haarer 2006, 11–114. See also Lee 2001.

Internally, social riots, which pitted the factions[28] of the Greens/Reds (representing the lower classes and Monophysites) against the Blues/Whites (rich orthodox landowners),[29] developed from festivals in which sport and theatrical performances such as mime and pantomime took place.[30] They began in 491 and culminated in 501 during the Brytae festival: on this occasion the stage collapsed, and one of Anastasius' sons was among the 3,000 dead. At the time, mime, which was supported by Procopius and Choricius of Gaza,[31] was tolerated, but pantomime was opposed by the Church. The measures taken to clean up the spectacles resulted in a ban on gladiatorial fights (*venationes*) first in 499, and then on pantomime shows in 502. This last ban confined the factions (and the popular charioteer Porphyrius) to hippodromes, in the hope of containing the rioting element of their audience,[32] but disturbances continued until the Nika riot in 532.[33]

Many scholars consider Anastasius' time an era of transition,[34] mainly because the tension between Christianity and paganism came to a head in the sixth century,[35] and this was evidenced in other aspects of social life, as well as in the cultural and literary environment. However, some scholars claim that most areas, including Egypt, were by then nearly completely Christianised: the Thebaid, as noted earlier, was home to renowned Christian leaders such as Alexander and St John of Lycopolis.[36]

Anastasius surrounded himself with educated (and polyglot)[37] professionals, and he was known as a promoter of literary endeavour at the Imperial court and its provinces.[38] John the Lydian (an administrator and writer on antiquarian topics, born in 490) recalls, as a pleasant memory, that his career went faster under Anastasius, while he cannot say the same about his professional progress under Justinian; we can assume his comment to be genuine and particularly valuable, as he did not write an encomium for Justinian.

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28 Liebeschuetz 1998; Greatrex and Watt 1999.

29 Haarer 2006, 224; Chauvot 1986, 166–71.

30 Webb 2009a; Hall and Wyles 2008.

31 Amato, Corcella, Ventrella and Maréchaux 2014, 16–21.

32 Haarer 2006, 223–9.

33 Greatrex and Watt 1999; Liebeschuetz 1998; Greatrex 1997; Cameron 1973, 239.

34 Allen and Jeffreys 1996.

35 The last pagan temple, that of Philae, was closed under Justinian.

36 On the development and expansion of Christianity in Egypt see Choat 2012; Lee 2001, 52–62; Bagnall 1993, 278–303.

37 For an overview of bilingualism, literacy and education in late-antique Egypt see Depauw 2012 and Bagnall 1993, 230–60.

38 Nicks 2000.

Priscian's and especially Procopius' panegyrics list the achievements of Anastasius in times of war and peace:[39] in particular, Procopius tells us of how he abolished the *chrysargyron*[40] in 498, of his financial reforms,[41] and of his many building projects.[42] Among the many men of letters at court, Turcius Rufus A. Asterius, consul in 494, was also a poet; Leontius, praetorian prefect in 510, was also a law professor and was later involved in the *Codex Iustinianus*; Sergius, prefect in 517, was also a lawyer, a writer, and a sophist; and finally Priscian, who was from Caesarea but was active in Constantinople, was also the author of the *Institutio de Arte Grammatica*, which became a popular Latin manual during the Middle Ages.[43]

Christodorus of Coptos' activity at the court offers some insight into the philosophical atmosphere at the imperial court: the poet's Neoplatonic position is manifested clearly in his *monobiblos* dedicated "to the pupils of the great Proclus",[44] composed probably around 485, the year of the philosopher's death. But Christodorus was able to openly maintain his views also after he was hired by the emperor in 497, as he employs some Platonic terminology from the orphic oracles (also used by Nonnus)[45] in the ekphrasis of the statues of the gymnasium of Zeuxippos (*AP* 2.398),[46] a work commissioned by the emperor and composed around 503. Therefore it is reasonable to assume that Neoplatonism was, if not embraced and promoted, certainly accepted at Anastasius' court.[47]

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39 In 494 Anastasius reformed the coinage; in 498 the *collatio lustralis*, a tax on craftsmen, was abolished, while successful efforts were made to increase the efficiency of tax collection and reduce the rates of land taxation. At his death he left behind a surplus of 320,000 lbs. of gold; Haarer 2006, 7, 185–7 and 202–6.

40 The *chrysargyron* was an unpopular tax; it was levied every four years on people of all ranks and on animals, and it was in force during the first 170 years of the Eastern Roman Empire. Libanius, Zosimus and Evagrius report that it caused extreme hardship, claiming that parents were forced to sell their children as slaves or prostitutes to pay the levy.

41 Haarer 2006, 194–213.

42 Haarer 2006, 233–45.

43 Dante puts him together with the sodomites in his *Divina Commedia*, Inf. XV 109. However, we have no other testimony to this; even Boccaccio expressed his surprise at Dante's verdict and assumed that he intended, with his allegation, to blame those who actually teach his doctrine. Others think that Dante mixed up Priscian with a Priscillian, a heretic bishop of the fourth century.

44 Lamberton 2012.

45 For Neoplatonic echoes and contents in Nonnus' poetry see Hernández de la Fuente 2014.

46 Tissoni 2000a, 37–44.

47 Here I follow the chronology of the works proposed by Tissoni 2000a, 20–3, who argues against Cameron's dating of the ekphrasis to AD 500 on the basis of comparison with the panegyrics of Anastasius by Procopius of Gaza and Priscian of Caesarea.

The literary production of the fifth and sixth centuries is vast and ranges across a variety of genres, which often blend together: the ekphrastic historical *de Aedificiis* by Procopius of Caesarea also works as a panegyric of Justinian, while his *Historia Arcana* doubles as an invective against the same emperor and his court; Christodorus' epic on the Isaurian wars also fulfils the purpose of an encomium to Anastasius, and Paul the Silentiary's ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia contains encomia of Justinian and the patriarch Eutychius. Recent scholarship has contributed to a better understanding of the intricate connections between literary works and patronage.[48]

Between the fourth and the sixth century AD, the concentration of poets in the Egyptian region of Thebaid is much higher than in other regions. It has been argued by various scholars[49] that it is not possible to join the poets who followed—more or less broadly—the metric rules established by Nonnus in a "school of Nonnus", on the basis that the existence of such a school, or doctrine, cannot be demonstrated. It seems more appropriate to speak of a "Nonnian style", based on the definition of what those metric rules involved.

What is the root of this exceptional passion for poetry among Egyptians? Eunapius,[50] a sophist from Sardis from the fourth century AD, recalls how Prohaeresius, a contemporary Christian teacher and rhetorician from Caesarea who taught in Athens, was asked by the Romans to send over one of his pupils to teach in Rome. The selected pupil was Eusebius[51] from Alexandria, a student particularly talented at flattering influential people. Egyptians are said to be crazy about poetry,[52] a popular cliché at the time, but also charlatans: αἰγυπτιάζειν meant "to act like an Egyptian, i.e. to be sly and crafty". Zosimus uses the adjective αἰγύπτιος with the disparaging meaning of *charlatan* referring to Oxius from Cordova, who converted Constantine to Christianity.[53] The *Historia Augusta* described the Egyptians as *viri ventosi, furibundi, iactantes, iniuriosi atque adeo vani, novarum rerum usque ad cantilenas publicas cupientes, versificatores, epigrammatarii, mathematici, haruspices, medici. Nam <in>*

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48 Cameron 1965c, 1978, 2004; Rapp 2005; Jeffreys 2006; Miguélez-Cavero 2008; Haarer 2010.

49 A comprehensive history of scholarship regarding the so-called school of Nonnus is included in Miguélez-Cavero 2008, Chapter 1, in particular 93–9 (about the more recent schools of thought on the definition of "Nonnian style"); see also Gonnelli 2003, 7–8.

50 Eun. *Vit. Sophist.* 493.

51 Eusebius may have been the brother of another sophist, Alexander, who had studied with Julian (*Suda* A 1128). See Penella 1990, 89.

52 τὸ δὲ ἔθνος ἐπὶ ποιητικῇ μὲν σφόδρα μαίνονται, ὁ δὲ σπουδαῖος Ἑρμῆς αὐτῶν ἀποκεχώρηκεν, "for that race is mad about Poetry, but Hermes, who inspires serious study, would not dwell with them"; see below and Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 86; Cameron 1965c, 470.

53 Cracco Ruggini 1971, 418 n. 57, about Zosimus *Hist. Nov.* 2.29.

*eis Christiani, Samaritae et quibus praesentia semper tempora cum enormi libertate displiceant*,[54] "For the Egyptians, as you know well enough, are puffed up, madmen, boastful, doers of injury, and, in fact, liars and without restraint, always craving something new ... Among them, indeed, are Christians and Samaritans and those who are always ill-pleased by the present though enjoying unbounded liberty".[55] Allusions to the cliché of Egyptians being cunning can also be found in Heliodorus,[56] where we meet the Egyptian priest Calasiris, who flees his hometown Memphis to escape the temptations of Rhodopis, a beautiful Greek courtesan touring Egypt.

The second element comes from comparing Eunapius' passage to two passages by Choricius of Gaza,[57] where it is explained how poetry (the Muse) represents the primary stage of education, when a student—normally a child in the early stage of the education process—learns how to read, comment on and also compose some poetry under the guidance of his γραμματικός.[58] The higher level of education, associated with λόγος and Hermes,[59] included rhetoric, philosophy and the four arts, and it should be the natural progression for anyone who intends to become a serious rhetor.[60] In the above passage, Eunapius criticises the Egyptians for not being able to move on to this second level: although committed to rhetoric and with a successful career back home, Eusebius realises how inadequate his preparation is when it is time to face a serious orator such as Musonius. Eunapius is criticising Egyptian education, which promoted poetry as the objective of schooling, and limited sophists to trivial matters.[61] He associates the Egyptians' passion for leisure poetry (they are described as *versificatores* in the *Historia Augusta*) with epideictic rhetoric, i.e. Egyptians rhetors may be skilled, but only when it comes down to declaiming on fictional topics, or sweet-talking some politician. When confronted with a serious orator, their education may leave them short.

54 SHA *Quadr. Tyr. Firm. Sat.* 7.4–5. See Agosti 2001, 236.

55 Trans. D. Magie.

56 Hel. *Aeth.* 2.25.1, see Morgan 1982, 236.

57 Chor. *Or.* 2.7 (*Laudatio Marc. II*), and *Or.* 7.7 (*Or. Fun. in Procop.*).

58 Too 2001; Morgan 1998; Cribiore 1996, 1997 and 2001a; Alesso 2002, 21–22; Hernández de la Fuente 2004, 394.

59 Agosti 2006a, 42 n. 32 and Pernot 2006, 129–75 about Hermes *Logios* and Demosthenes.

60 Kaster 1988, Marrou 1956; Morgan 1998 and 2003.

61 Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 87 and Agosti 2006a, 37.

Procopius of Gaza also warns the aspiring professional speaker to steer clear of Alexandria,[62] a place where time-consuming poetry was practised by scholars who were not committed to professional rhetoric. Miguélez-Cavero suggests that Eunapius may be blaming the Egyptians for being unable to write "serious philosophical prose",[63] perhaps since he preferred Athenian to Alexandrian Platonism,[64] thus somehow implying that Alexandria had lost its prestige as the philosophical capital. However, some testimonies of the time show that, on the contrary, Alexandria was still the great Egyptian cultural centre that spread its influence to other cities such as Gaza, which had gained a reputation in their own right.[65] The influence in question is specifically that of Neoplatonism:[66] for instance, it is possible to trace the influence of theologian Cyril of Alexandria (whose Commentary on John's Gospel was published around 425) in Nonnus' poetry.[67] Procopius calls Alexandria τὴν κοινὴν τῶν λόγων μητέρα,[68] and Aeneas paints a pleasant portrait of the town, although probably only due to his friendly connection with Neoplatonic Hierocles.[69]

Aspiring poets and public speakers, then, underwent the same education.[70] However, a shared education also meant that poetry had a pragmatic and

62 Proc. Gaz. *Ep.* 57 Garzya-Loenertz εἰ δέ σε τοῦ Μακεδόνος ἡ πόλις ἐφέλκεται χαρίτων ἕνεκα καὶ τοῦ δοκεῖν αὐτὸν ἔχειν ἤδη τὸν Ἑλικῶνα, ζήλου τὸν Ὀδυσσέα καὶ παρελθὼν τὰς Σειρῆνας μέμνησο τῆς Ἰθάκης, "if the city of the Macedonian [Alexandria] appeals to you for its pleasures and because it seems that it holds the Helicon itself, remember Ithaca". Here Ithaca symbolises Odysseus, who, according to a widespread Byzantine interpretative tradition, was the model of the soul's resistance to the abandonment of music and poetry, an image that was also adopted by Neoplatonic philosophers and Christians: see Amato 2010, 339 and 440 and Amato, Corcella, Ventrella and Maréchaux 2014.

63 Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 87.

64 Agosti 2006a, 37.

65 See Bitton-Ashkelony and Kofsky 2004 for Gaza as a unique centre of symbiosis in which pagan tradition (in the form of festivals and public life) continued to coexist within the Christian context.

66 As we know from Aeneas' *Theophrastus* and Zacharias' *Ammonius*. Like Timotheus of Gaza, they also studied at Alexandria under the reign of Anastasius.

67 Hernández de la Fuente 2014, 242.

68 Proc. Gaz. *Ep.* 119 Garzya-Loenertz; see also *Ep.* 104 and 118.

69 Proc. Gaz. *Ep.* 15. Euxitheus, also a pupil of Hierocles in Aeneas' dialogue *Theophrastus*, is probably an autobiographic character (see Penella 2009, 2 and Lamberton 2012). See also Watts 2006, 213.

70 As well explained by Ael. Theon in *Pr.* 2.70; see Kennedy 2003, 13.

performative[71] dimension to it, which has only recently been rightly emphasised.[72] Poetry, but also progymnasmata, epistulae and other genres, was read in the context of private circles of friends,[73] in which works of the tradition but also of contemporaries[74] were scrutinised by highly educated scholars, and also in contexts of official public occasions, often of agonistic nature. As rightly interpreted by Agosti, late-antique poetry was agonistic as it implied a contest not only with tradition, but also with rivals: Agathias *AP* 4.4.67–70, in line with Nonn. *Dion*. 25.27,[75] defines poetry's main aim of being read in public before an audience who is able to judge not only the contingent performance, but also the challenge it offers to previous models.[76]

This performative side of late antique poetry is not surprising and helps in contextualising the role of ethopoiiai and progymnasmata as models of an epic work such as the *Abduction*.[77] Oral public performance also represents the link that fastens it to theatrical forms and pantomime.

Musaeus is generally considered to be Egyptian, mainly due to the fact that his metre follows Nonnus' rules quite closely. The extremely limited information in our possession tells us he was a γραμματικός.[78] The dating has proved to be challenging: however, since Colluthus and Christodorus of Coptos refer to him,[79] most scholars date Musaeus between the end of the fifth century and the beginning of the sixth century.[80] Musaeus was probably the addressee of two letters by Procopius of Gaza,[81] and the author of the widely-imitated epyllion in 343 hexameters entitled *Hero and Leander*, which relays the sad myth with a simple and linear technique.

71 Agosti 2006a and 2005a, 37. See also Hall and Harrop 2010; Fuhrer and Nelis 2010; Hall 2006.
72 Agosti 2006a and 2008.
73 Agosti 2006a, 41.
74 Possibly also including Biblical texts; see Agosti 2006a, 43 on Sinesius *Ep*. 30, and Garzya 1989, 259.
75 For public readings of the *Dionyasiaca* see Agosti 2005a, 46.
76 Agosti 2006a, 43–6.
77 Agosti 2005a, 50. A discussion on the influence of progymnasmata and education on the Egyptian poets writing in Greek between the third and the seventh century AD is in Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 264–370. See also Nocchi Macedo 2014, 148–55.
78 *PLRE* II, *s.v.* "Musaeus, Grammaticus and poet, L V/M VI", p. 768; "Musaeus Grammaticus [4]", *BNP* 9, 319–20.
79 Schwabe 1876; Criscuolo 1978, 212.
80 Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 25 n. 157.
81 Migotto 1992, XXVII.

The plot brings us back to the tradition of Alexandrine elegy, and it is possible that Musaeus modelled his poem on other Hellenistic epyllia, since the myth was already familiar to the Latin poets of the Augustan age. Musaeus draws especially on Nonnus and Homer,[82] but among his other models are Hesiod, Euripides, Apollonius Rhodius, Callimachus, Lycophron, the *Bassarica* and Oppian's *Halieutica*. Some scholars[83] also linked Musaeus to Ovid, after identifying some similarities between his passages and *Heroides* 18 and 19, although Miguélez-Cavero sees the influence of ethopoiiai or other rhetorical exercises as the reason behind this, rather than a direct knowledge of Ovid by Musaeus.[84] His faith has also spurred some debate: while he is also influenced by Gregory of Nazianzus and Nonnus' *Paraphrase of the Gospel of Saint John*, there is no obvious reference to the holy texts in his epyllion; nevertheless, Keydell and Kost[85] think that he was a Christian. Musaeus enjoyed widespread success, becoming a model to his contemporaries.[86]

*Patria* represented a popular poetic genre of the time. They were poems on the foundation, history and antiquities of cities: the genre originated from the κτίσεις performed by Hellenistic poets at the various θυμελικοὶ ἄγωνες.[87] Cameron cites mobility as he lists the shared features of the wandering poets between fourth and sixth century AD, arguing that, when the local history of a place was exhausted (after the publication of the *patria*), the poets, who often also worked as teachers or had bureaucratic careers, were forced to travel somewhere else, in search of their new location, subject, audience, and patron.[88] Claudian, who moved from Alexandria to Rome and wrote poems of various genres both in Greek and in Latin, is a great example of a professional travelling poet and of a polyglot Egyptian professional scholar.[89] However, it

82 Not only the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but also the *Hymn to Aphrodite* and the *Batrachomyomachia*, as his many commentators have shown (Gelzer 1967, 135; Kost 1971, 43). Leander is an Odyssean character, and the scene of Hero's seduction is modelled on the encounter of Odysseus and Nausicaa, see Merone 1955; Morales 1999, 47 and 57–8.

83 Kost 1971, 21–3.

84 Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 26. See Agosti 2005a, 50 on Musaeus' ethopoietic speeches (e.g. the pathetic monologue delivered by Leander at 245–50 and the paradigmatic use of mythological figures at 135–57).

85 Keydell 1933, 767; Kost 1971, 17.

86 Gelzer 1967, 139 considered him an authority in his time and immediately after his death.

87 Cameron 1965c, 489.

88 Hernández de la Fuente 2004, 395; Alsina 1972, 146–47.

89 On the knowledge of Latin in the multilingual scholarly community see Evans 2012 and Dupauw 2012.

can hardly be maintained that the only reason for a poet to travel was the publication of a work of propaganda (especially *patria*, which links the poet to the geographical location); for instance, Nonnus, who included in his *Dionysiaca* numerous catalogues of Greek towns and *patria*-related digressions such as the *ktiseis* of Tyre and Berytus (books 40–43), probably never travelled to Greece or Asia Minor.[90] Colluthus' geographical knowledge also appears bookish, as he hardly exploits the opportunity to insert digressions on places through which Paris travels on his way to Sparta.[91]

Christodorus of Coptos, recorded by the *Suda* as a ἐποποιός (hexametric poet),[92] was also active under Anastasius, as we have seen. Also hailing from the Thebaid, his name would suggest that he was a Christian, although it is commonly agreed that, while his parents were probably Christian, he must have been pagan.[93] This conclusion is drawn from the fact that he wrote *Against the Christians*, and the poem *About the pupils of the great Proclus*, which he dedicated to Proclus, a Neoplatonic philosopher and a fierce self-confessed pagan. It has also been argued that he was the author of an anonymous encomium of an unknown emperor,[94] identified with Anastasius by Haarer.[95] Christodorus also wrote a history of Constantinople, Ἰσαυρικά, about Anastasius' victory in the Isaurian war in 497,[96] *Lydiaca* on the mythical history of Lydia,[97] and πάτρια on Thessalonica, Miletus, Nacle, Constantinople, Tralles, Aphrodisias.[98] This leads us to assume that Christodorus, like other authors of *patria*, must have had to travel, although poets often also had access to existing material about the topic of interest. As a result of memorisation practised during training years at school, erudition constituted the cultural backbone of any scholar, so it would not have been impossible for a poet in, for instance, Coptos, to write a *patria* about Constantinople, using pre-existent aetiological material.

90 Chuvin 1991.
91 Cuartero I Iborra 2003, 192.
92 *Suda* X 525 Adler; Baumgarten 1899; PLRE II, 293 *s.v.* "Christodorus, poet L V/E VI"; also Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 31 n. 208 ("in spite of Baumgarten's opinion, he seems to be a different person from his namesake in the next entry of the *Suda*"), following Cameron 1965c, 475 n. 33.
93 See Cameron 1965c, 475; Tissoni 2000a, 37; Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 31.
94 Tissoni 2000a, 16.
95 Haarer 2010. I am grateful to Dr. Haarer for allowing me to read this paper before publication.
96 Pamprepius of Panopolis (440–484) also wrote Ἰσαυρικά, on the restoration of the Isaurian emperor Zeno, aided by his general Illus.
97 Two lines survived in schol. A on *Il.* 2.461 (= Heitsch S 8.1); see also Tissoni 2000a, 17–18.
98 See also *P.Argent.* 481 which contains a *patria* of Hermoupolis (Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 63).

Christodorus also wrote an ekphrasis of the statues displayed in the *thermae* of the gymnasium of Zeuxippos, near the imperial palace in Constantinople (*AP* 2). In his description of Pompey's statue, Christodorus suggests that his poem was commissioned by Anastasius, and allusively compares the emperor's achievements to those of Pompey.[99] Jeffreys suggests that travelling poets used a sample piece to show off their erudition and their skills to impress a potential new patron. This is possibly the method that Christodorus and others may have used to move on to the next employer. Christodorus describes statues of Virgil, Apuleius and Caesar in a work addressed to an educated readership. In order to fully understand and enjoy the poem, his public would have had to master not only the metre (i.e. ancient quantities that were no longer respected in spoken language), but also a vast catalogue of myths and passages of predecessors who may have written about the same topic, and to whom the new poet may have referred.

Ekphraseis of architectural works in particular were extremely popular in late antiquity and were often composed to be recited on inaugurations,[100] such as Paul the Silentiary's *Ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia*, which celebrated Justinian's rebuilding of the dome in 563.[101] The School of Gaza produced many remarkable examples:[102] John of Gaza described a cosmological painting in the baths of either Gaza or Antioch blending Christian and pagan elements;[103] Procopius of Gaza described paintings of the myth of Phaedra and Hippolytus; Choricius of Gaza's *Laudatio Marciani* includes an ekphrasis of two churches.

A brief survey of encomia shows how Priscian of Caesarea and Procopius of Gaza, authors of panegyrics of Anastasius, dealt with the tension between Christian and pagan religion differently.[104] Although they are both Christian, Priscian writes in Latin, while Procopius writes in Greek; Priscian mainly uses Christian imagery, while Procopius prefers pagan imagery; Priscian links Anastasius' lineage to Pompey, and insists on the emperor's God-given right to rule, while Procopius links Anastasius' lineage to Heracles and Zeus,

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99 See Tissoni 2000a, 21–2; Jeffreys 2006, 127–39.

100 On public declamation as the main channel for late-antique ekphraseis, especially in sixth-century Gaza, see Renaut 2005.

101 Paul's account emphasises the effect of light and space in the building and the splendour of the multicoloured marble. The information he provides corresponds to what is known of the church at that time and contains useful details about the original decorative scheme (see Whitby 1985).

102 See Renaut 2005 for ekphraseis produced by this school and their occasion and aim.

103 Carvounis and Hunter 2008b, 5.

104 Nicks 2000, 192–4.

and claims that the emperor's power comes from a more meritocratic election; Priscian compares the emperor to other recent Roman emperors, such as Nerva, Marcus Aurelius, Trajan, while Procopius links Anastasius to pagan characters such as Agamemnon and Alexander; finally, Priscian chooses to exalt Anastasius through virtues to which both pagans and Christians aspired, such as *pietas* and philanthropy, while Procopius' encomium of Anastasius highlights pagan ideals.

Procopius (465–528)[105] was the initiator of the Rhetoric School of Gaza, whose exponents were Christians with a wide knowledge of, and a similar approach to, classical tradition. Procopius also wrote works of ecclesiastical exegesis and secular nature, ekphraseis and epistulae, two of which are addressed to a Musaeus,[106] who is generally believed to be the epic poet contemporary of Colluthus. Aeneas, Procopius' contemporary and fellow citizen, was a disciple of Neoplatonic Hierocles[107] in Alexandria; alongside stylish epistulae, he wrote the dialogue *Theophrastus* on the immortality of the soul, where he deals with the resurrection of the dead through a Christian approach, but also relies heavily on Plato, Plotinus and his vast knowledge of classical erudition. Choricius of Gaza, Procopius' pupil, was the main exponent of the Palestinian school in the first half of the sixth century. He mainly wrote works of rhetoric; among his collection of occasional speeches on historical and mythological subjects, it is

105 Amato, Corcella, Ventrella and Maréchaux 2014.

106 Proc. Gaz. *Ep*. 147 and 165; see Amato 2010, 413 and 427.

107 Hierocles was a militant pagan who was publicly flogged. Neoplatonism did not conflict ideologically with Christianity: Hierocles was influenced by Christianity, and Saint Ambrose by Plotinus. A good summary of works about the relationship between Neoplatonism and Christian monotheism can be found in Edwards 2004. Scholarship exists in support of the view that Christianity was a form of Platonism (there were some Platonists such as Celsus and Porphyry, who were monotheistic, i.e. they believed in an ultimate principle), but Edwards explains that this ultimate principle does not equal the Christian God: the fact that Platonists were monotheistic does not mean they were compatible with Christians, who preached a universal God, not a particular god. For Christians, God was not an adjective, but a personal name, while for Platonists it was an epithet of the ultimate principle (never a person). Platonism stated that every person houses a little bit of the divine, while for Christians God became a man, and there is no belief without worship, and no worship is due to anyone but God. Ultimately, the difference can be summarised with Platonism being a philosophy, while Christianity a religion (i.e. involved worship). Even in the early mid-third century, Christianity and Platonism were easily distinguished.

worth mentioning the *Apologia Mimorum*, which contains useful information on late-antiquity drama.[108]

In historiography, too, the boundaries between the old religion and Christianity appear blurred as new challenges presented themselves to the authors of the genre.[109]

Zosimus lived in Constantinople, where he carried out bureaucratic tasks before 503. He wrote the *New History*, a pagan-inspired work that intended to overturn the ecclesiastic histories;[110] the events stop in 410, before Rome's conquest by Visigoth King Alarichus. Zosimus exalts Rome's government, blames the overthrow of pagan religion for the fall of the empire, and harshly attacks the Christian emperors, especially Constantine and Theodosius. While Polybius had related the events through which the Roman Empire reached its greatness, Zosimus undertook the task of telling the causes of its decline. The strongly pagan perspective reduces remarkably the documentary value of his work, although the *Historia* still stands as a dramatic testimony of how one of the last representatives of pagan religion saw the end of ancient civilisation.

John Malalas (491–578), from Antioch, was a chronicler and the author of a *Chronographia* in 18 books; as it stands (the beginning and the end are lost), it begins with the mythical history of Egypt and ends with the expedition to Roman Africa under the tribune Marcianus, Justinian's nephew, in 563. The last book includes a great deal of official propaganda on the reign of Justinian. Malalas focusses largely on Antioch, his hometown, and on Constantinople; his history, which mixes Biblical material, myth and real history, is not thought to be of much value to the historian. Malalas attempts to reconcile Judaeo-Christian tradition with Hellenic and Roman tradition (as when he synchronises Trojans and David): he portrays Hellenic tradition digested within his Christian view of the developed Roman government. Malalas supports Church and State, and monarchical principles. The *Chronographia* aimed at the education of common people and monks (as shown by its language, a compromise with the spoken language of the day).[111] This made Malalas' work highly

108 Choricius recently attracted much interest among scholars: see Amato, Thévent and Ventrella (2014); Amato, Corcella and Lauritzen (forthcoming); Amato, Corcella, Ventrella and Maréchaux 2014, 16–21.

109 A comprehensive summary of the main challenges faced by late-antique historiographers is in Croke 2012, especially 417–30; see also Rohrbacher 2002, 7–11.

110 Tissoni 2000a, 43 n. 63.

111 However, compare Horrocks 1997, 179–81: "it is still very much a written style. In particular, he employs technical terminology and bureaucratic clichés incessantly, and, in a

popular, as shown by the number of extant manuscripts of his text which, due to its length, was quite expensive to copy.

Procopius of Caesarea (490–575) wrote about Justinian's wars and military campaigns, emphasising in particular the achievements of Belisarius, the emperor's chief military commander whom he accompanied on his campaign as his legal adviser. He also wrote *de Aedificiis*, an ekphrasis of the main buildings built by patron Justinian. The *Historia Arcana* is an account of the immoral lives of Justinian, described here as avid, crazy and cruel; his wife Theodora, with Procopius' focus on her past as a pantomime dancer prior to becoming the empress; Belisarius, an inept general incapable of standing his ground with his wife and lover; and his wife Antonina, cruel and unfaithful. Some scholars explain the discrepancy of his position regarding Justinian (first praised, then denigrated) as an attempt to gain freedom from writing on commission; however, recent studies have suggested that Procopius may have meant to present both sides of the same story.[112]

Hymnography provides a good example of the literary richness of this period; in contrast with Procopius' classicising history, the Christian hymns of Romanus the Melodist enjoyed great popularity. He moved to Constantinople under Anastasius and is believed to have produced around 1,000 kontakia, of which 80 survive. These were sermons of around thirty lines, each with a refrain, and joined together by an acrostic. The kontakion style, a descendant of the Acathistus Hymn,[113] follows a complex rhythmic structure and is characterised by a "lively retelling of Biblical narrative".[114] The subjects vary between ecclesiastical festivals, hagiography or other sacred topics. Romanus' *Kontakion of the Nativity* was sung by the joint choirs of Hagia Sophia and of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople every year at the imperial banquet on Christmas Day up to the 12th century.

period of transition from Latin to Greek governmental terminology, still uses the Latin loanwords alongside their Greek replacements (…). The overall impression created by Malalas's style is one of simplicity, reflecting a desire for the straightforward communication of information in the written language of everyday business as it had evolved under the influence of spoken Greek."

112 Kaldellis 2004; Cameron 1985.

113 Peltomaa 2001 backdates the hymn, which is considered the masterpiece of its genre and was previously attributed to Romanus, to the end of the fifth century.

114 Jeffreys 2006, 135.

The picture that emerges from this overview shows the variety of genres and tendencies of the literary environment in which Colluthus operated.

## 3 Colluthus and the Epyllion as a Genre

Colluthus' poem comes at the very end of a long list of predecessors, and while some features fit in with the so-called epyllion genre, others do not.[115]

In modern scholarship, the word "epyllion" is generally used to define narrative mythological poems of relatively short length (a couple of hundreds of lines), normally in hexameters.[116] Unfortunately, however, the word "epyllion" has become part of our vocabulary only in recent times.[117] The Greek word *epos* defined a work in hexameters, or even a single hexameter line:[118] this original meaning should be sufficient for us to place only hexametric poems in the epyllion "genre". Unfortunately, however, the matter is not as straightforward as it seems.[119]

Colluthus' epyllion is the result of a tradition and a specific context, and the poet chose how to use each feature based on how he meant to reprocess his models. We are dealing with a group of poems that differ in contexts and literary traditions: if a criterion to group them together must be sought to understand how tradition was reprocessed and find continuity, it has to be other than their appearance, and possibly internal to the poems.

Various scholars have suggested different criteria, seeking to find some features shared by these poems;[120] for instance, Gutzwiller[121] focusses on the subversion of epic norms; Crump[122] focusses on the presence of digressions; Merriam[123] sees in the presence of female heroines the shared feature of

115 Criscuolo 1978, 213; Pontani 1973, 1–6.
116 Baumbach and Bär 2012a, ix; Gutzwiller 1981, 3; Fantuzzi and Hunter 2004, 191.
117 For the history of the word, see Allen 1940 and 1958.
118 Hollis 2006, 141.
119 Baumbach and Bär 2012a, ix–xvi; Gutzwiller 1981, 2–9; Lightfoot 1991, 49; Pontani 1973, 1–6, 20.
120 A concise summary of scholarly approaches is in Baumbach and Bär 2012a, ix–xi, where definitions for the genre are also tested against each other.
121 Gutzwiller 1981.
122 Crump 1931, 22–4.
123 Merriam 2001.

epyllia.[124] A more generic pattern is that an epyllion usually relays a full myth or episode.[125]

Baumbach and Bär, in their recent companion on the epyllion, discussed the advantages and the disadvantages of the criteria proposed by scholars over time, concluding that (small) scale only applies to Hellenistic texts, (short) length is a feature found in epic works since Homeric times, and content cannot be considered as an exclusive feature of the epyllion genre as it would imply the exclusion of many works (including didactic poetry and hymns) but it is helpful in reading certain texts in connection with one another.[126]

It has been suggested that, rather than entering a debate based on quantitative elements, we should focus on the evidence of the extant texts and aim to identify those "qualitative terms regarding style and treatment" that represent the common patterns in all these poems.[127] Another risk involved with the epyllion's taxonomy is the possible trap of a teleological perspective, which implies (and thus presumes) an evolution in a genre moving from its birth, through its maturity, to its death. Moreover, any definition of genre can be strict and rigid, and it is not always suitable for works that are on the borderline with other genres (a feature of much of late-antique literature): for instance, aetiological interest brought epic and erudite material together in *ktiseis* and *patria*, poems about the mythological foundation of cities.

One reasonable approach could be to appreciate and value (rather than to blame) the variety of epyllia's (in topic, style and narrative techniques) for the abundance of (rather than for the difficulty in identifying) shared features across the texts. In fact, it is certainly possible to differentiate epyllia from epic sub-genres[128] such as hymns, encomia, bucolic and didactic poems, based on their subject: the epyllion has a mythological topic, bucolic poems have a pastoral topic, didactic poems a scientific one, while the hymn has a religious topic, and the encomium a propagandistic content (however, these last two types may contain mythological material, in the form of a mythological

124 However, this is a feature that appears mainly in later poems, especially from Parthenius' *Erotica Pathemata* onwards, and it can be linked to the taste for tragic love stories, which evolved around abandoned or betrayed girls, or women involved in what Merriam calls "unnatural" affections.

125 However, [Theocr.] 25 is the untold tale of the cleaning of the Augean stables, which is its main subject; see Ambühl 2010, 162–3.

126 Baumbach and Bär 2012a, xi–xvi.

127 Ambühl 2010, 152–4.

128 Ambühl 2010, 155.

*exemplum*). Moreover, it is not always easy to draw the line based on the metre used, since metrical boundaries between genres cannot always be defined, as in Claudian's poems, where epic is blended with encomium. The key to fully appreciating these poems could be to stop trying to find shared features, and begin to read them as individual products of their time: in each work models and influences from preceding and contemporary tradition flow together, as well as different goals in terms of content and audience.

It is perhaps useful to summarise the key points of the evolution of the epyllion as a genre through those poems that are widely categorised as epyllia.

Until Callimachus' *Hecale*,[129] the main feature of epyllia had been the picturesque and realistic descriptions (as in Theocritus and Moschus' idylls); now the plot, although simple and uncomplicated, gains more importance, albeit descriptions remain present.

The fragments of Euphorion[130] launched a new style which inspired Parthenius of Nicaea's *Erotica Pathemata* in the first century BC,[131] the [Gallus] *Ciris* and even Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In this type of epyllion, centered on a tragic love story and/or a lesser-known subject matter (in the style of Callimachus), the plot becomes more complex, descriptions are no longer realistic (as they were in Theocritus and in the *Hecale*), and there is a marked taste for sensationalism and horror. In addition, the choice of myths is instrumental in allowing the poets to delve into morbid psychology.[132]

Not all Roman poets of the time followed the new style launched by Euphorion. In a letter to Atticus[133] written in 50 BC, Cicero alludes to some *cantores Euphorionis*, certainly the poets who belonged to Catullus' circle:[134] Cinna, author of the poem *Zmyrna*; Calvus, author of *Io*; and Cornificius, author of the poem *Glaucus*. The [Virgil] *Culex* also probably belongs here.[135] Catullus' *Carmen* 64 is a Hellenistic epyllion composed of a series of graceful pictures modelled on Theocritus' idylls and Moschus' *Europa*, rather than on the *Hecale*. Although Catullus' carmen is closer to the bucolic idylls, rather

129 The perfect example of Hellenistic epyllion (Hollis 2006, 142).

130 Magnelli 2002.

131 Scholars almost unanimously agree that Parthenius was the mediator of Euphorion's work in Rome, since the knowledge of his work at Parthenius' time is almost impossible to demonstrate (Lightfoot 1991, 48–49 and 57–58).

132 For a comprehensive discussion which also considers the role of Parthenius in the introduction of Callimachus (and of the epyllion in general) to Rome see Lightfoot 1991, 50–76.

133 Cic. *Att.* 7.2.1.

134 Summary and discussion on the Ciceronian references in Lightfoot 1991, 54–58.

135 Crump 1931, 47.

than to Euphorion's and Parthenius' poetics, Euphorion was certainly regarded as the model by the circle, as the title of the *Zmyrna* seems to suggest a poem of particularly cryptic subject matter and language.

Cicero alludes once again to the emulators of Euphorion in 44 BC,[136] probably referring to a new circle that included Virgil, Gallus and Parthenius.[137] Virgil may already have published some early work by 44 BC,[138] and so may have Gallus, who notoriously translated Euphorion's works, and is linked to the poet from Chalcis by Virgil in two passages.[139] Moreover, if we assume it to be the early work of a young Virgil, the *Culex* must have been written between 54 and 48 BC. The *Ciris*, a work attributed to Gallus or to another poet of this circle, was seen by Cicero as the extreme opposite of his preferred epic, Ennius' *Annales*. This Euphorion-style epyllion does not seem to have enjoyed much popularity, as it was not reproduced later. The models of this circle were Theocritus and other authors of idylls, while it is harder to trace the influence of Callimachus, which is hidden in allusions to programmatic references. However, the influence of Callimachus and of Euphorion on this generation of poets can clearly be retrieved, respectively, in their programmatic approach and in their choices of topics.[140]

Virgil's *Aristaeus* (26 BC) is a Hellenistic epyllion which the author has personalised with touches of human realism and romance, making it outstandingly original. The myths relayed by Cinna, Calvus, Cornificius and Virgil appear once again in the *Metamorphoses*, where Ovid tells a new tale of an old story by means of imagination (rather than realism), dramatisation, and a taste for the ridiculous, bringing the reader into a world of illusion, a fairyland.

The tradition of Greek epyllion evolved during the imperial period with the didactic poems *Halieutica* by Oppian of Anazarbus in Cilicia (late second century AD), and *Cynegetica* by Oppian of Apamea in Syria (early third century AD). Epic re-emerges around the third century AD with long works such as Quintus of Smyrna' *Posthomerica*, in 14 books, and with the *Sack of Ilion*, a poem in 691 hexameters by Egyptian Triphiodorus. The last epyllia known to us are Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* and Musaeus' *Hero and Leander*, dating to the period between the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth century AD.

136 Cic. *Tusc*. 3.19.

137 Crump 1931, 40–9.

138 The *Eclogues* were composed between 43 and 37 BC, and show the mastery of an experienced poet.

139 Virg. *Ecl*. 10.50–1 and Serv. on Virg. *Ecl*. 6.72; see Lightfoot 1991, 59–64.

140 Lightfoot 1991, 63.

How does the *Abduction of Helen* compare with the requirements that scholarship has proposed for the epyllion to be a genre?

Let us begin by surveying its digressions. In the *Abduction of Helen*, Colluthus includes two digressions. The first to appear is the story of Phyllis (213–18), who, abandoned in Thracia by Theseus' son Demophon (who had married her on his way home from the Trojan War), travelled nine times to the shore to look out for her husband's ship, and hanged herself when he did not return.[141] Colluthus is describing the lands through which Paris is travelling on his way to Sparta, and when Paris passes through Thrace, this sad story of abandonment comes to his mind. The story had already been used by Callimachus[142] and recurs in Ovid, *Heroides* 2, and in a letter by Procopius of Gaza,[143] a contemporary of Colluthus. The motif of the foreign princess abandoned by a travelling hero[144] is dear to Hellenistic poets, as it includes ingredients such as love, exotic landscape, betrayal, abandonment, bravery, and death—all topics that appealed especially to poets like Euphorion and Parthenius, and that were instrumental in stirring up new sensations in the audience.

The digression in Catullus' *Carmen* 64 is the myth of Ariadne who is abandoned in Naxus by Theseus.[145] The size of the digression is considerably out of proportion compared to the main subject (lines 125–50), and we also have a digression within the digression at lines 50–115 on the love of Ariadne and the slaying of the Minotaur. Catullus' digression is linked to the main story by parallel (as both are unions between human and divine) and contrast (the unhappy marriage of Ariadne and Theseus casting a shadow over the main narrative of the happy marriage of Peleus and Thetis). On the other hand, Colluthus has chosen to present his digression in a very brief yet dramatic way: Paris sees Phyllis' grave, the story of her wandering is told in one line (215), then unexpectedly the poet switches to the second person and addresses Phyllis herself,[146] then we see her waiting for Demophon and wondering if he will ever return from Athens. Suddenly Phyllis becomes a live interlocutor with Colluthus, and readers find themselves face to face with the princess. The effect is not that of a

141 An almond tree grew on her grave and blossomed when Demophon went to visit her. An alternative version of the myth speaks of a coffin that she had given to her husband before he left for Athens, telling him to open it only if he ever decided not to go back for her; he is then killed when he opens the coffin, as he falls on his sword.

142 Call. fr. 556 Pf.

143 Proc. Gaz. *Ep.* 47 Garzya-Loenertz.

144 Knox 1996, 111.

145 Colluthus' heroine, Phyllis, is abandoned by Theseus' son.

146 The change from indirect to direct speech is an interesting feature that will be discussed in Chapter 4.

dead person coming back to life, but rather that of a girl stopped in her tracks, while she is still wandering in desperation:[147] it is as if she turned around for a moment when the poet addresses her.

Colluthus' second digression (240–8) tells the story of Hyacinth, a beautiful boy loved by Apollo and Zephyrus, who, while competing with Apollo, was struck by the discus and died.[148] The story is told by many before Colluthus:[149] a poem in hexameters by Euphorion, titled *Hyacinthus*, did not survive; thus the obvious parallel comes from Ovid,[150] who tells the story from Apollo's perspective. The god's emotions are the focus of the poem: first the god's love for the boy, then his grief and his sense of guilt at Hyacinth' death, and finally his determination to keep his memory alive forever. Ovid sets a beautiful background for the events: the god and the boy strip off their clothes and prepare themselves to compete with the discus at midday, and the scene is saturated with luscious scents (the grass, the body ointment, the herbal remedies and many flowers). Suddenly Hyacinth is struck: Apollo seeks to heal his wound with his remedies, but all attempts fail and the boy dies. The god wants to keep his memory alive in his every song and in a flower that he grows from his blood; finally, as an extreme gesture of dedication, his tears, dripping on the hyacinth, engrave the letters AI AI on the flower's petals. In contrast, Colluthus tells the story almost as a tale of envy: firstly, the people of Amyclae marvel at the boy so much that they wonder whether he could also be the son of Zeus and Leto. Hyacinth is then the object of Zephyrus' envy (as the boy preferred Apollo to him), so Apollo protects him. In the end, the flower is a gift that the earth produces to comfort Apollo after the boy's death. Although Apollo weeps, no other emotion is displayed. Moreover, there is no mention of Apollo's responsibility for Hyacinth' death. Colluthus expects his reader to know the story: by relying on such a well-known tale, he can afford to omit some elements of the myth and select only those that are most useful to tell his tale of envy.

Digressions represent a common feature of epyllia and are considered by some scholars as a unique factor for classification. These secondary stories

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147 A similar destiny was that of Hero in Musaeus 336–8. Although Leander had been swallowed by the sea, he had not abandoned her.

148 In an alternative version, Zephyrus is responsible for blowing the discus at Hyacinth, seeking revenge because Hyacinth preferred Apollo to him.

149 *Il.* 2.595–600; Palaeph. 46; Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.3.3; Paus. 3.1.3, 3.19.4; Philostr. *Im.* 1.24 (Hyacinth); Philostr. Jun. *Im.* 14 (Hyacinth); Luc. *Dial. Deor.* 14 (170 AD); First Vatican Mythographer 197 (Thamyris et Musae). Nonn. *Dion.* 2.81–4, 4.133–4, 10.253–5, 11.257–61, 365, 12.154–60, 224–5, 247, 19.102–5, 187–8, 29.95–9, 142–3, 48.587.

150 Ov. *Met.* 10.162–219.

are told by another character[151] or by the main character himself,[152] and can appear in the form of an ekphrasis[153] of a work of art or as a digression.[154] The presence of digressions (as that of ekphraseis, mini-encomia and/or mini-invectives) offers an oblique perspective and represents another device often used by late-antique poets to break the linearity of the narration.[155]

Let us now look at the *Abduction*'s topic. Colluthus chooses an extremely well-known myth, thus joining a more Hellenistic tradition on this account: he could have intended to tell an old story in a different way or with new outcomes in mind. Dracontius, a contemporary of Colluthus, also wrote an *Abduction of Helen*,[156] introducing some variations to the story such as the meeting between Helen and Paris, which takes place not in Sparta but in Cyprus. Moreover, the choice of such a well-known myth was instrumental to Colluthus' objectives as it offered him an optimal opportunity to play with the reader's expectations.

Mythological content is another criterion that is often suggested as exclusive to, and constitutive of, an epyllion genre. If applied, this standard would exclude all didactic works and some Homeric hymns, narrowing the definition of epyllion to "a third person narration of a mythical topic progressing in a somehow linear sequence which does not programmatically aim at teaching its audience about specific objects and fields of (religious) knowledge".[157] Scholars have even narrowed down the type of myths chosen for epyllia, especially from the first century BC onwards, to those that are not well known (secondary traditions or even new ones),[158] emerging from a taste for the rare and the obscure.[159] However, familiar myths were also popular: many Hellenistic

151 E.g. the story of Britomartis introduced by the nurse Carme in the *Ciris*.

152 E.g. the slaying of the Nemean lion told by Heracles himself in [Theocr.] 25.

153 E.g. the ekphraseis of Europa's basket in Moschus' *Europa* and of the bridal couch of Peleus and Thetis, embroidered with the story of Ariadne, in Catullus 64.

154 Koster 2002, 32 distinguishes short epics from epyllia, whose unique feature was either an erotic theme, or the inclusion of a digression about a topic unrelated to that of the main narrative.

155 Agosti 2005a, 45–46; this pattern can also be found in Biblical poetry (*ibid.* 51).

156 The poem is considered by some scholars to be of a low standard (Hollis 2006, 156), although Dracontius' work offers interesting clues about the role of ethopoiia in larger poems (Agosti 2005a, 51).

157 Baumbach and Bär 2012a, xiii.

158 Such as *Zmyrna* by Cinna, or Parthenius' characters in his prose.

159 Crump 1931, 22–23.

epyllia focussed on the familiar myth of Heracles;[160] in particular, the motif of the fight of Heracles with the Nemean lion proved to be a particularly popular topic,[161] perhaps since this was his first labour, a fact that can be linked to the Hellenistic interest for aetiology (where the *aition* was represented by the skin of the lion). The aim could have been to re-write Heracles' myth to re-invent the literary tradition around Heracles, as in [Theocr.] 25, where the author continuously questions the sources and process of information—gathering and truth—finding, sowing doubts in his audience about the authority and reliability of the transmission of tradition. This is in line with the image that Theocritus 24 (*Heracliscus*) presents of the hero, who had canonically been represented as uneducated and a glutton, and now is instead engaged in music and grammar, and on a balanced diet.[162]

Love stories have also been seen as representing a shared feature of epyllia, often in the form of a digression.[163] It is certainly possible to trace this feature across the epyllia between the third century BC and the sixth century AD, with Theocritus 13, Moschus' *Europa*, Catullus 64, the *Ciris*, Virgil's *Aristaeus*, and Musaeus' *Hero and Leander*. However, not all poems deal with a love story, such as Theocritus 24, [Theocr.] 25, the *Megara*, Callimachus' *Hecale*, and the *Culex*. Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* can hardly be defined as a love story: there are many other elements that play a part, such as Aphrodite's power and Hermione's abandonment. The encounter of Paris and Helen occupies around seventy lines and, while it certainly is a central part of the poem, it represents only one stage of the erotic process rather than a full love story; the focus is centred around visuality and spectatorship of the two parties involved, and on the emotional consequences of well-orchestrated rhetorical speeches. There is no romantic anticipation on behalf of either of the two characters involved,[164] and the only future the couple can look forward to is one of toil and tragedy.

According to Baumbach and Bär, the Homeric or mythological content-related criteria can be useful to read certain texts in connection with one another, but they are not exclusive of epyllia, and thus they do not represent a sufficient element to constitute a genre called epyllion.[165] In fact, accepting

160 Among them Theocr. *Id.* 13 and 24, [Theocr.] 25, [Moschus] *Megara*, *Heracleia* by Rhianus, Diotimus and Phaedimus, and also Diotimus' *Heracles' Labors*.

161 Ambühl 2010, 156–7.

162 Ambühl 2010, 159–62.

163 Koster 2002, 32; Crump 1931, 22.

164 Paris, who is said to long for the one he had not even seen, anticipates his prize, not the woman.

165 Baumbach and Bär 2012a, xiv–xv.

a content-related criterion implies assuming that the author of an epyllion meant to represent an epic character in a non-traditional manner, i.e. in a satirical, subversive or undermining way. For instance, this is the case of texts in which heroes appear in contexts of everyday life or in unusual situations,[166] or in which the Homeric heroes and gods are represented ironically.[167] This approach, which entails an ideological dimension, is problematic and restricts any potential connection between texts;[168] furthermore, Colluthus' and Triphiodorus' poems would not fulfil these requirements and would thus need to be excluded from the epyllion-genre as the perspective on the subject adopted in them is cyclic or Homeric.[169]

Merriam 2001 argued that female characters are often the focus of epyllia: this is true especially from the first century BC, and can be explained with the increased interest in tragic love stories, particularly from Parthenius onwards.[170] However, other features that are often found in such contexts, such as the taste for morbid details and the enhanced pathos, are missing in Colluthus. The perspective on the heroines is also different: where a reader may elsewhere lose interest in the overloaded story of an abandoned girl, here we almost feel sorry for Helen, the victim of a love spell at the hands of Aphrodite, and for the family she abandons.

It is possible to trace a similarity between Colluthus' Helen and the *Ciris*' Scylla, who inspires pity as she is the victim of an uncontrollable force (love), while Ovid's Scylla is painfully torn between love and duty. The *Ciris*' Scylla is not guilty like Ovid's, and the same can be said about Colluthus' Helen, who, although acting as Aphrodite's puppet, leaves her home with a stranger of her own free will, and when she has the opportunity to straighten things up with her daughter (in her dream), she rejects any responsibility and blames Paris.

The other female character who shares the stage with Helen, Hermione, is chosen by Colluthus as the protagonist of a stand-alone episode of around 60 lines, which has been criticised by older scholarship for its lack of connection with Helen's main story. The choice of this character fits into the

166 Wasyl 2011, 19.

167 Gutzwiller 1981, 6 argues that irony is a typical feature of epyllia, thus including in the genre hymns as well; on the similarities between the two genres see Baumbach 2012 and Petrovic 2012.

168 One example of the risks of circular reasoning, quoted by Baumbach and Bär 2012a, is Merriam 2001, 76–77.

169 Fantuzzi 2004, in Baumbach and Bär 2012a, xv.

170 Kloster 2012, 309.

preference of poets, dating back to Hellenistic times, to give voice to secondary characters, especially women and children. Hermione is chosen precisely for playing a secondary role in the myth (her relevance coincides mainly with her wedding to Neoptolemus, to whom she was promised since she was a child), and for being a child.[171]

Like her mother, Hermione is also abandoned: her story can be considered particularly pathetic (and thus fitting into the above-mentioned pattern of post-Parthenius works), but one should remember that she is a child who has been abandoned by her mother, and not a girl abandoned by a lover. By telling this story in such detail, and making it the second focus of his narrative, Colluthus chooses a surprising approach that plays with his readers' expectations: where they would have been accustomed to, and expecting to read, the pathetic story of an abandoned lover (Ariadne, Medea), now they read about the truly heartbreaking lament of an abandoned daughter. The filial love of Hermione for Helen is presented in parallel (and in direct sequence) with the erotic love of Helen for Paris: readers are presented immediately with the painful consequences that the latter causes to the former, suggesting them the obvious comparison between the two feelings and the ethical evaluation of each.

The role of direct speech in Colluthus is crucial: the story is told mainly through speeches, which multiplies the perspectives with which the reader is presented, and gives the impression of a polyphonic text.

Direct speech is frequently used in epyllia as a technique to create a domestic and realistic atmosphere: characters who speak directly to each other affect readers more than a story told by a narrator, where second-hand information is presented. A great example is the [Moschus]' *Megara*, a poem built on the two speeches by Heracles' mother Alcmena and wife Megara, where we can feel the anguish felt by the two women as they share their concern. [Theocritus] 25, on the cleaning of the Augean stables, also contains various speeches through which an unaware ploughman seeks to identify a Heracles in disguise. In the *Ciris*, Scylla's nurse Carme tenderly comforts Scylla and remembers her daughter's destiny.

Regarding style, Colluthus skilfully adapts his pitch to the context: Aphrodite addresses Athena and Artemis in a sarcastic tone, while a mesmerised Helen sounds ironically naive at the sight of beautiful Paris. In the two narrative segments of the poem—the arrival of the guests at Peleus and Thetis' wedding, and the description of Paris' journey to Sparta—Colluthus' style is refined and allusive, always encapsulating an erudite memory of previous poetry in

171 Cuartero i Iborra 2003, 194.

his lines. His approach demands narratees' participation and interaction with his text.[172]

One aspect that is generally agreed upon in scholarship is the style of the epyllion, which is always allusive, erudite, refined, and its atmosphere, which is always intimate and realistic.[173] The allusive taste of Alexandrine poets led to multiple outcomes, and once again, it is not possible to group multiple poems under the same banner. The *Hecale*, for instance, with its erudite references and refined allusions, and Catullus' *Carmen* 64, the result of a very fine *labor limae* and yet gracefully light poem, have little in common, for instance, with Lycophron's *Alexandra*, considered by some to be an example of how Hellenistic poetry at its worst produced a maze of obscure allusions. Similar discrepancies are also found within single works; in his *Europa*, a highly allusive poem, Moschus misses many opportunities to show off his erudition (aetiological, geographical, and genealogical): the result is a simply-structured epyllion which forces its readers[174] to continuously refer back to elements from predecessors' texts, but which is not as multilayered and as structurally complicated by cryptic allusions as those of his contemporaries.[175]

If we abide by the original meaning of the word "epyllion", we should group only hexametric poems under this definition.[176] However, some poems in elegiacs are stylistically and thematically very close to the epyllia, such as Callimachus' tale of Molorchus and Heracles in the Victoria Berenices in the elegiac *Aetia*.[177] We also know of poets who wrote in both metres,[178] and the

172 See Chapter 4.

173 Ambühl 2010, 159; Del Corno 1988, 405.

174 For the effort that is expected of readers see Hinds 1998, 21, 25, 71.

175 Lightfoot 1991, 22–23.

176 Our list would include the idylls by, and falsely ascribed to, Theocritus, Moschus' *Europa*, [Moschus]' *Megara*, Callimachus' *Hecale*, Bion's *Epithalamium Achillis et Deidameiae*, Philetas' and Eratosthenes' *Hermes* (which were probably hymns), Euphorion's *Chiliades*, Catullus' *Carmen* 64 (*Peleus and Thetis*) and the lost epyllia of the other *neoteroi*: the *Zmyrna* by Cinna, *Io* by Calvus and *Glaucus* by Cornificius, [Virgil]'s *Culex*, [Gallus]' *Ciris*, Virgil's *Eclogue* 4 (*Aristaeus*), Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Musaeus' *Hero and Leander*, and Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*.

177 The fact that elegy and hexameter narratives did not always differ in their subject-matter calls for a comparison when looking at epyllia (Lightfoot 1999, 25–26).

178 Philetas wrote the hexametric *Hermes* and the elegiac *Demeter*, and Eratosthenes, the author of another hexametric *Hermes*, also wrote the elegiac *Erigone* (Lightfoot 1999, 25). Alexander Aetolus and Parthenius of Nicaea also wrote poems in both metres. Gregory of Nazianzus wrote panegyrics and invectives in both hexameters and iambics.

preference for hexameter or distich can hardly be simply attributed to personal taste. Boundaries between different metrical forms had always been quite vague, and there seems to be no rigid equation between a genre and a metre.[179] Stylistic differences existed between epic and elegiac compositions: Cameron[180] discriminates between personal elegy (where the narrator is present) versus impersonal epic, although it is hard to agree with such a differentiation as it is purely based on statistics regarding the number of interventions made by the narrator.[181] Moreover, there are cases in which this does not apply, as in Callimachus' hexametric *Hecale* versus his elegiac *Aetia*, where there is no relevant difference in the weight of the author's voice.[182]

The question of form and genre has been approached by Rutherford through a clear distinction between classical and Hellenistic concepts of genre: whereas the meaning of 'genre' in classical times is defined mainly by the shared function or shared performance scenario (rather than by the formal features) and by the reflection of an actual practice, the post-classical approach emphasises the differentiations between genres, "both in maintaining them and in deliberately crossing them in order to generate interesting literary effects".[183] Although Rutherford points out that the boundaries between the two approaches were occasionally blurred in classical and Hellenistic times, these considerations contribute to a better understanding of how the employment of genre features (formal and non formal) was exploited during Hellenistic and imperial times to achieve specific outcomes such as that of belonging to a particular genre. Besides fitting predominantly into the didactic and narrative tradition, Callimachus' *Aetia* thus evokes other genres to the mind of its readers (such as elegy, epinician, epigram, etc.) through a network of allusions.[184] Callimachus' *polyeideia*, visible throughout his whole production and also within the *Aetia*, reflects the interest in literary genres of his contemporaries, and leads one to investigate other possible objectives which prescind from stylistic embellishment.[185] Similarly, Colluthus' bucolic opening, as well as his portrait of Paris, fulfils the objective of creating an impressionist idyllic

179 For a discussion on the matter see Fantuzzi-Hunter 2004, 34.

180 Cameron 1995, 437–53.

181 Ambühl 2010, 155.

182 Ambühl 2010, 155. However, Harder 2012, 31 justifies the choice of elegiacs for the *Aetia* precisely for its personal and subjective nature, while hexameters seem more suitable to the 'serious' *Hecale*.

183 Rutherford 2001, 3–6.

184 Harder 2012, 23–36.

185 For Parthenius' *polyeideia* see Lightfoot 1991, 48–49.

scene, by means of borrowing from the pastoral tradition in terms of language, content, and imagery.

Another interesting point is that Philetas, Callimachus, Euphorion and Parthenius all had a great reputation as elegy masters among Romans,[186] but there is no evidence that Euphorion wrote elegies:[187] what survived are some epigrams and some hexametric fragments which seem to suggest an epic subject. We can hypothesise that his work in elegiacs was of higher quality than his hexametric production, or that his elegiac production was simply larger compared to what has survived. Martin West suggested that hexametric poems may have been destined to men may have been men's preferred reading, whereas elegiac poems were addressed to a female audience.[188] Or should we assume that elegiacs enjoyed in general a wider popularity or favour than hexameters?

Another criterion that is often used to define epyllion is the poems' length. Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*, in 394 hexameters, is neither close to the shortest poems (Theocritus' *Id.* 13, 76 lines) nor to the longest (Eratosthenes' *Hermes*, 1600 lines); however, between these two extremes, we have a substantial series of Roman and late-antique poems ranging in length from roughly four to seven hundred lines: Catullus' *Carmen* 64 comes up to 408 verses, the *Culex* to 616, the *Ciris* to 541, Triphiodorus' *Sack of Ilion* to 691, making our judgement more challenging.

Hollis[189] questions how anyone could suggest to use the same definition of epyllia for poems of a considerable length, such as Callimachus' *Hecale* (whose estimated length is at least 1,000 lines)[190] and Eratosthenes' *Hermes*, and much shorter poems, like Theocritus *Id.* 13 and 24 (circa 186). Ambühl[191] also rejects the classification based on the criterion of length, as, again, it is based on statistical analysis and does not take into consideration that, between the third century BC and the sixth century AD, epic writing had naturally been through centuries of development, and as stylistic formulas changed, size may also have evolved. Fashion in favour of a longer or shorter work played a role, as well as each poet's taste for a more narrative or more synthetic storytelling style. Callimachus' dislike for long and grand poems, for instance, can also be seen as a result of the evolution of public and poetic frameworks. Whereas

186 Prop. 3.1.1; Virg. *Ecl.* 10.50; Quintil. *Inst.* 10.1.58.

187 Ambühl 2010, 156.

188 West 1978, 101–15.

189 Hollis 2006, 142–3.

190 Hollis 1990, 337–40 and 2006, 142.

191 Ambühl 2010, 152.

archaic bards had a large audience prepared to listen to their work, Hellenistic epic was addressed mainly to an élite of well-educated readers; moreover, an archaic poet could benefit from recitation and conceal a mistake, and even a mediocre poem, if recited by a skilled performer, could be made attractive. In contrast, Hellenistic poets had no external aid, and thus their poems had to be refined and focussed around form and detail.[192]

The multiplicity of lengths of the various poems cannot be justified only by the different contexts in which poets were writing: we can probably expect shorter works during Hellenistic times, but this does not actually apply to a poem such as the *Hecale*, which was written by the very poet who had condemned poems *of various thousands of lines*.[193] Many factors can play a role in dictating the length of a poem: for instance, a poet may or may not decide to tell a story briefly; to include a digression of variable length (sometimes including a secondary digression); to linger on some names that provide the opportunity for aetiological information. A poet can also decide to simply tell a story in a linear series of pictures (like the *Hylas*, or *Hero and Leander*), or to add extra side-stories which do not add to the plot itself but are instrumental in adding drama or in embellishing the main story, or in displaying the poet's erudition (like Catullus' *Carmen* 64).

Colluthus' *Abduction* generally fits in with the definition of epyllion as a genre. At the time of Colluthus, the guidelines for writing epic poetry were still the same of the Hellenistic period: Colluthus ticks all the boxes by adopting Homeric language, colourful and stand-alone scenes, mythological content, dramatic atmosphere achieved through a style heavily influenced by rhetoric, and, occasionally, a taste for evaluation. His choice of a paratactic structure to juxtapose self-contained scenes also contributes to create this opinion.[194] His interest in minor deities such as Peitho, Hermaon and Enyo, and for lesser-known myths such as that of Phyllis, also fits in with the Hellenistic preference for obscure and secondary characters.[195] This is also evident in his

192 Crump 1931, 10–11. Baumbach and Bär 2012a, xii also agree that the brevity of poems mainly applies to Hellenistic works and should only be a strictly formal factor since it does not exclude other purposes or significances that can also be specific to certain contexts.

193 Call. *Aet.* fr. 1.3–5.

194 Finkelberg 1998, 121–30 examines how parataxis is seen as the only form of narrative that can be employed to convey a truthful epic in Homer. A veracious account of the facts necessarily coincides with an orderly catalogue-like narration of the sequence of the events, as witnessed in first person or as told by a witness to the narrator.

195 Alesso 2002, 30–32.

choice to make Hermione the other central protagonist of the story: a secondary character in the myth of Helen, but also a child and a daughter. Finally, the interest in visual behaviour, such as that for architectural ekphraseis, fits in with the obsession of the time with anything visual, as well as with the Neoplatonic theories on eros that were also embraced by Christodorus and Claudian.

The debate about the existence of a so-called epyllion genre is ongoing, but the uncertainty that such a genre existed (and was thus canonised) means that the features of this genre cannot be defined, and makes any attempt to analyse a text's compliance with it flawed. The search for shared and exclusive patterns in view of justifying and constituting a genre has often led to restrictive interpretations of late-antique works in particular: perhaps a more useful approach should shift the focus onto what contributes to gaining a better understanding of these texts, and to the connections between them and their models, independently from their affinity with an epyllion-genre.

CHAPTER 2

# Colluthus and His Models

The *Abduction of Helen* is a jigsaw of models interacting on a linguistic, content-based and stylistic level. Most of these models have been identified by Livrea in his 1968 edition, but no work has been done to interpret how these models have been employed. Colluthus' version of the story is based on the *Cypria*,[1] with a few alternatives, but he also engages with Homer, Apollonius and Nonnus as his main models.

In three selected scenes, the poet draws on specific genres: the proem and the description of Paris (epic and bucolic poetry), Eris (epic poetry), and the beauty contest with Aphrodite's speeches (rhetoric and invective). His objective was not to fit in with his predecessors, but to create expectations in his readers in order to then surprise them with a twist. This can be approached through a methodology which considers traditional epic models but also identifies allusions[2] to more contemporary poets, and in some instances offers a new reading through the key to Colluthus' poetry, irony.

This approach owes much to the theories of Fowler and Hinds in particular.[3] The debate around the author's intentionality with regard to textual connections to other texts remains open.[4] The focus here is therefore on the effects that the poet hopes to achieve in his readers, and, consequently, on how an educated reader would have received such references,[5] independently from the author's intentions. On some occasions, however, a classification of Colluthus' echoes to other texts can be suggested as either citations or revisions are possible; this differentiation is in some instances possible based on a traditional analysis of the models used to either support a point (thus by quoting a predecessor as a warrant) or to disagree strongly from them, with the intention of presenting a new version of the story or to correct the model's version.[6]

1 See n. 9 p. 37.
2 For the theory behind intertext and allusion see Fowler 1997.
3 Fowler 1997; Hinds 1998. See also Farrell 2005 and Schmitz 2007 for surveys of literary theory and the classics.
4 Farrell 2005, 98–9.
5 Martindale 2006, 3; Zajko 2006, 82–3.
6 Hinds 1998, Chapter 4; Riffaterre 1990, 73–5.

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This choice derives from the fact that the two main criteria to distinguish intentional from accidental references as defined by the intentionalist school of thought, i.e. the author's familiarity with his model (markedness), and the significance of the reference,[7] can only partially be applied to the *Abduction*. Firstly, no matter how close Colluthus' text may seem to, for instance, a line of Nonnus, it can hardly be proven that he knew these texts himself. This statement may seem as an exaggeration, given that what Conte and Barchiesi define as the *modello-codice*[8] is represented, in this context, by the whole epic tradition of models ranging from Homer to Triphiodorus. However, given that we do not have any information about Colluthus' biography, we can only assume that his education would have involved first-hand reading of his models. He could have read some of the texts in the original language, some in translation, or in school, or in translinear translation. Secondly, the issue of significance of the reference to another text leads to obvious questions regarding the perspective of such significance: is the intertextual reference significant in the eyes of the author, or in those of the reader? Once again, the matter remains open.

## 1 A Bucolic Opening

The opening of Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* (lines 1–16) and the section about Paris (102–26) instantly instil a bucolic feeling in readers. Literary models, content, and scenario are borrowed from both the epic and the pastoral tradition, and the impression that we perceive from the sounds and images in this section is unmistakably bucolic; but did Colluthus just want to write another epic proem and paint another bucolic picture?

The proem[9] occupies the first sixteen verses of the *Abduction*, and is followed by the scene of Peleus and Thetis' wedding, including a parade of the gods and goddesses attending the ceremony (lines 20–39), and Strife's plan to

7 Fowler 1997, 19; Farrell 2005, 99–102.

8 Conte 1986, 141–51; Barchiesi 1984, 91–121.

9 In 1928, De Lorenzi suggested that the *Abduction*'s proem was the work of a scholar who added it to the poem after Colluthus' death. His theory was based on alleged contradictions between the proem and the rest of the poem, which led him to consider the *Abduction* a fragment of an unfinished poem; this explained why it is not quoted among the works of Colluthus in the *Suda*. In De Lorenzi's view, this poem was an *Antehomerica*, a work that was meant to cover the events prior to the Trojan War and stand beside Quintus of Smyrna's *Posthomerica* and Triphiodorus' *Sack of Ilion*, which bridged the gap between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. De Lorenzi also based his theory on two different traditions that would have been followed within the poem: the author of the proem follows Callimachus' *Aetia*, whose

take revenge on Zeus, as she was not invited (lines 40–58). Strife throws a beautiful apple into the nuptial banquet, and Hera, Athena and Aphrodite all wish to seize it (lines 59–68).

This first part of the poem (up to line 40) is structured quite closely on Apollonius *Arg*. 1.1–227: the proem occupies in both poems the first 16–17 lines; afterwards, Colluthus goes straight into the scene of the wedding of Thetis and Peleus, listing the gods attending, as in Apollonius, where the next part is occupied by the Argonauts' catalogue, with shared features that will be discussed below. Moreover, he is also involved in a banquet in *Arg*. 1.12–14 and neglects to pays his respects to a goddess (Hera), as Cheiron and Peleus do in the *Abduction* in 39–40.

Colluthus begins his poem by addressing the Nymphs directly, and asks them to tell him about Paris and the story of the abduction of Helen, which he is about to tell. The traditional incipit of an epic poem more commonly involved the Muses as the repositories of the truth:[10] this occurs in many Homeric and Hesiodean *loca*,[11] and in Hellenistic and late epic,[12] as well as in Roman epic.[13] According to Giangrande, Colluthus is not calling the Nymphs as witnesses to the facts, but as inspirers,[14] following a Hesiodic-Hellenistic motif: Colluthus, who extensively uses Alexandrine models,[15] confirms this with ποταμοῦ Ξάνθοιο γενέθλη (1); in fact, water was in Hellenistic times a symbol of poetry (see *infra*), and Nymphs are water divinities.

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models are the *Cypria* and Sophocles' lost *Krisis* (this can be reconstructed through some similarities with Ovid's *Heroides* 16 and 17, and with Lucian's *Dearum Iudicium*). The rest of the poem, however, does not follow Callimachus, Ovid or Lucian, but seems to follow only the *Cypria*. Livrea 1968a, XVIII–XXIII and 1968b convincingly refuted all of De Lorenzi's arguments. In particular, he attributes Colluthus' alleged discrepancies from a lost Hellenistic model to the preference for a different narrative technique, a "pittoricismo di superficie" that, while being unconcerned with chronological order, favours instead a sequence of picturesque images, well-defined characters and colourful dialogues, joined by bare links. This, according to Livrea, reveals the direct influence of Nonnus on our poet, and a possible influence of pantomime (especially for the invective of Aphrodite): as we shall see later, this suggests an interpretation of the epyllion through the lens of performative poetry.

10 Livrea 1968a, 56; Accame 1963, 257–81, 385–415.

11 *Il*. 1.1 θεά, *Od*. 1.1 Μοῦσα, Hes. *Th*. 1 Μουσάων Ἑλικωνιάδων, *Op*. 1 Μοῦσαι Πιερίηθεν, *Thebais* fr. 1 Allen θεά, *h.Merc*. 1 Μοῦσα.

12 Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 1.1 ἀρχόμενος σεο Φοῖβε, Nonn. *Dion*. 1.1 θεά, Triph. 4 Καλλιόπεια, Mus. 1 θεά.

13 Virg. *Aen*. 1.8 *Musa*, Enn. *Ann*. 1 *Musae*, 217 *Musarum*, Sil. It. 1.3 *Musa*.

14 Giangrande 1969, 149 and 1968. Livrea 1991, 562 strongly disagreed, showing that Colluthus drew his inspiration from a series of passages in Quintus.

15 Livrea 1968a, XXII.

So why does Colluthus choose to invoke the Nymphs and not the Muses? Livrea[16] rejected De Lorenzi's interpretation,[17] which justified the unexpected invocation of the Nymphs, and not the Muses or Apollo, as the deliberate choice of a poet other than Colluthus, who was seeking not to appear too obvious. The long debate is after all superfluous, as Muses and Nymphs are not necessarily to be distinguished in this context:[18] in Lycophron 274, for instance, the Muses are called Nymphs. His choice could also confirm the bucolic nature of his opening. There is a rich tradition involving the Nymphs as the addressees of a request by the author to grant him a song, or as the recognised teachers: in Theocritus, Simichidas introduces his song by telling Lycidas how he also learnt many good songs from the Nymphs while he was tending his cattle.[19] Virgil also asks the Nymphs to grant him a poem before he starts his song: *Nymphae* (…) *mihi Carmen,* (…) *concedite* in *Ecl.* 7.21, and they are addressed again in *Aen.* 8.71–3 *nymphae, Laurentes nymphae*, and by Statius in *Silvae* 1.5.23. Callimachus too, in *h.* 4.109, has Νύμφαι Θεσσαλίδες, ποταμοῦ γένος, εἴπατε πατρί and 256 νύμφαι Δηλιάδες, ποταμοῦ γένος ἀρχαίοιο.

Before looking at the Trojan Nymphs as addressees of the poet's request, it is worth noting that, for Colluthus, Helen is almost always a νύμφη: at 12–13 the poet asks the Nymphs where Paris first heard the name of the Argive Nymph (πόθεν ἔκλυεν οὔνομα νύμφης / Ἀργείης); at 342 the maids tell Hermione that Helen may have joined a gathering of young women (νυμφάων ἐς ὁμήγυριν ἀγρομενάων); Helen is described as a νύμφη at 278, 295, 306, 317, and, as in a climax, at the end of the story Paris, the groom, leads the bride into the harbours of Dardania (ὁ νυμφίος ἤγαγε νύμφην 390).[20] Colluthus means to emphasise Helen's role as a young bride: she is also defined as παράκοιτις at 164 (like Hera at 64 and 139, bride of Zeus), and her bed is offered to Paris by Aphrodite (165). Perhaps, by choosing to begin his epyllion with this word, Colluthus also meant to play with the double meaning of νύμφη: on the one hand, the sacred Nymphs, divine creatures and guarantors of the truth; on the other hand, Helen, a young bride whose bed is for sale, a burden of war, rubbish (φόρτον 327), someone who ends up lying to her daughter when she could take responsibility for her own actions (379–80).

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16 Livrea 1968a, 57.

17 De Lorenzi 1928, 48.

18 For West 1966, 154–5 Colluthus' choice is another "unsuccessful experiment".

19 Theocr. 7.91–3 πολλὰ μὲν ἄλλα / Νύμφαι κἠμὲ δίδαξαν ἀν' ὤρεα βουκολέοντα / ἐσθλά. The Nymphs are also questioned by the poet in 1.65 πᾷ ποκ' ἄρ' ἦσθ', ὅκα Δάφνις ἐτάκετο, πᾷ ποκα, Νύμφαι; cf. also 1.140–1 ἔκλυσε δίνα / τὸν Μοίσαις φίλον ἄνδρα, τὸν οὐ Νύμφαισιν ἀπεχθῆ.

20 Paris is also projected by Aphrodite as a future groom at 166.

The Trojan Nymphs are here the addressees of six questions posed by Colluthus (5–13):[21] they are asked to reveal Paris' plans; why he came down from the mountain[22] to undertake a journey over the unknown sea; what need was there for the ships and for a herdsman to cause the turmoil; what was the primeval origin of the feud; what was the judgement about; and from whom Paris first heard Helen's name. Besides the traditional nature and location of this invocation, this apostrophe to the Nymphs appears more powerful than that to Dionysus in 252, not only in length (it occupies the whole proem, 16 lines), but also because it demands an active role for the Nymphs themselves. While Dionysus is simply called upon and apologised to, here the Nymphs are asked to come and satisfy the poet's curiosity by fulfilling a number of requests. In an atmosphere of lively interaction, Colluthus bombards the Nymphs with questions, establishing from the beginning his aetiological interest, which was also confirmed by the insistence on vocabulary about the origin of the Trojan War (ἀρχεκάκων 9, ὠγυγίη 10). A close model of his proem is certainly Nonnus' proem to the *Dionysiaca*, where the poet demands answers from the Muses with similar confidence;[23] Nonnus often introduces a new episode with an onlooker who voices the poet's and the reader's questions, as in *Dion*. 1. 90–126, where a Greek sailor witnesses the abduction of Europa and wonders about the marvel of a bull riding the waters. In Homeric epic, the invocation to the Nymphs (or Muses) is equivalent to a request to gain an orderly account of the events, in the same order (κατὰ κόσμον) as they took place: an account narrated in the exact sequence of the facts (as told by an eyewitness or by someone who heard from one) is similar to a catalogue, and is truthful.[24]

Colluthus thus demands the truth. The reason why they, and no one else, are being interrogated is that they are the ones who witnessed the events: γὰρ ἐθηήσασθε μολοῦσαι (13). Thus, by demanding answers directly from the eyewitnesses, Colluthus is also sealing the truthfulness of his version of the facts.

The Nymphs had replaced the Muses in Theocritus as privileged inspirers of pastoral song, and this is precisely what he is about to sing: a bucolic proem. The Nymphs are also a chorus, an element that fits in with the overall performative feel of the epyllion. Choruses and dances in fact appear widely from the beginning of the poem: see for instance the dance that the Nymphs are about to perform at 4, and Apollo's entourage, a chorus of Muses at 24.

21 The presence of numerous questions is typically Callimachean, see *Aet*. fr. 7.19–21 and 2.86, where the Muses are interrogated by the poet durig a banquet.

22 I follow ἐξ ὀρέων, the reading of β, adopted by Livrea, Mair and Orsini.

23 Shorrock 2008, 102.

24 Finkelberg 1998, 121–30.

Who are these Trojan Nymphs, then? Apart from the Callimachean model mentioned above, Quintus of Smyrna mentions them as the daughters of river Xanthus in three places.[25] We know that Colluthus' choice of addressing the Nymphs shows a clear intent to adhere to the bucolic tradition. Livrea also sees in Colluthus' choice to introduce the daughters of the river Xanthus (1) a possible erudite allusion to the venue where the judgement took place, as in *Etymologicum Magnum* the river is indicated as the place where the Nymphs wash their hair and adorn their bodies for the judgement.[26] However, considering Colluthus' attention to colours and hairstyles within the epyllion, the choice of ξανθός could simply be a playful reference to the blonde river; this suggestion is reinforced by the presence, at the following line, of πλοκάμων, the Nymphs' locks.

The reason why the Nymphs, and no one else, are addressed and interrogated by the poet on the reasons behind the story has been well explained by Paschalis: the Nymphs have left their head-bands on the shore of the river, together with their sacred toys, and this is precisely why they witnessed the judgement of Paris.[27] They have come themselves to have a good look (αὐταὶ γὰρ ἐθηήσασθε 13), and the poet demands that they seal the truthfulness of his tale with their first-hand testimony.

The scene in which the Nymphs are presented also deserves some consideration: they are on the banks of a river, playing with a ball, when they abandon their veils to prepare for a dance on the Ida (2–4). The scene contains all the traditional ingredients of other rape scenes, where girls are presented as playing or dancing or engaged in other innocent activities (like picking flowers or fashioning garlands) in a *locus amoenus* (a meadow, a river or a spring), and suddenly they are raped.[28] The direct model of this passage is

25 Quint. Sm. 11.245–6 ἐπεστενάχοντο δὲ Νύμφαι / καλλιρόου Σιμόεντος ἰδὲ Ξάνθοιο θύγατρες, "but all the Nymphs were wailing, daughters born of Xanthus and fair-flowing Simoïs"; 12.459–60 ἄμφι δ' ἄρα στενάχοντο μέγα Ξάνθοιο θύγατρες / Νύμφαι καὶ Σιμόεντος, "the Nymphs, daughters of Xanthus and Simois moaned aloud"; 14.72–3 Ξάνθος ἔθ' αἱματόεντος ἀναπνείων ὀρυμαγδοῦ / μύρετο σὺν Νύμφῃσιν, ἐπεὶ κακὸν ἔμπεσε Τροίῃ ἔκποθε, "Xanthus, scarce drawing breath from bloody war, mourned with his Nymphs for ruin fallen on Troy" (trans. A.S. Way).

26 See *Etym. Magn.* 715.37–39, *s.v.* Σκάμανδρος· Ξάνθος δέ, ἐπειδὴ ἐκεῖ λουσάμεναι αἱ θεαὶ ξανθὰς ἔσχον τὰς κόμας, ὁπότε Ἀλεξάνδρῳ ἧκον ἕνεκα κάλλους κριθησόμεναι; also schol. AB on *Il.* 21.1–2, Eust. 1197.49, and Wörner, *s.v.* "Skamandros" in Roscher 4, 978–9.

27 Paschalis 2008, 139.

28 In *h.Dem.* 6–10 Persephone is picking flowers in a meadow with the daughters of Oceanus when Zeus kidnaps her. In Moschus, *Europa* 28–36, Europa and her friends are making

*Od.* 6.100–2: αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ σίτου τάρφθεν δμῳαί τε καὶ αὐτή, / σφαίρῃ ταὶ δ' ἄρ' ἔπαιζον, ἀπὸ κρήδεμνα βαλοῦσαι, / τῇσι δὲ Ναυσικάα λευκώλενος ἤρχετο μολπῆς. “Then when they had had their joy of food, she and her handmaids, they threw off their veils and went to play at ball, and white-armed Nausicaa began to sing”. The similarity of the two passages appears even more striking as at 105 the Nymphs are said to be with Nausicaa. Colluthus goes beyond Homer through *oppositio in imitando*:[29] while in Homer the veils are put aside so as not to be an obstacle to their singing, in Colluthus the veils would serve a purpose, in holding the Nymphs' πλοκάμοι (2) while they play. What the poet is asking is that they play with their hair down, so they look most beautiful at the moment they need to inspire him, so that his poetry may also be beautiful (*remota metaphora*).[30]

### 1.1 *A Poetic Manifesto*

This first part of the poem, including the description of Paris, contains many references to the poetics of Colluthus. The opening scene contains a number of water elements: the Nymphs are daughters of the river Xanthus ποταμοῦ (1); its sands are recalled in ψαμάθοισι (3); κελάδοντος … ποταμοῖο, the river “sounding like flowing water” (6); πόντον (7)/ἁλός (8); νηῶν (8); πόντον (9). Colluthus aims at creating a picturesque scene in an impressionistic way, and for the proem the image is that of flowing water. Similarly, in *Cypria* fr. 5 Allen, Aphrodite's toilette on the Ida rich with fountains was accompanied by the Nymphs. Water is a well-known allegory for poetry,[31] which originates from Philetas and also appears in Propertius and Callimachus.[32]

It is possible that Colluthus also attempts here an allegorical reference to his poetry, as did Callimachus in *h.* 2.105–12, where he, through the voice of Apollo, expresses his taste for brief and refined poetry:

flower baskets and gathering flowers in a beautiful meadow (68–9) when Zeus appears in the shape of a bull and abducts the young girl. Claudian *Rapt.* 2.136–41 also describes Persephone as she is fashioning flower baskets and garlands, just before she is abducted by Pluto in 204.

29 Giangrande 1969, 149.

30 The scene gains an additional meaning if we consider the context of the judgement of Paris. Κρήδεμνα, “veils”, represent the modesty which is left behind; paradoxically, what follows is not the Nymphs being snatched away from the river, but Paris, who is being taken from Troy to judge the goddesses.

31 Giangrande 1968, 491–92.

32 In Prop. 3.1., Philetas and Callimachus are called upon for having adopted the image of pure water as a symbol of poetic inspiration.

ὁ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ' οὔατα λάθριος εἶπεν·
'οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὃς οὐδ' ὅσα πόντος ἀείδει.'
τὸν Φθόνον ὡπόλλων ποδί τ' ἤλασεν ὧδέ τ' ἔειπεν·
'Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλά
λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ' ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἕλκει.
Δηοῖ δ' οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι,
ἀλλ' ἥτις καθαρή τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει
πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβὰς ἄκρον ἄωτον.'

Envy secretly said in the ear of Apollo: "I admire not the poet who does not even sing as much as the sea." Apollon kicked Envy with his foot and spoke thus: "Great is the stream of the Assyrian river, but it carries on its waters much filth of earth and much waste. But the bees carry water to Deo not from everywhere, but of the trickling stream that springs from a holy fountain, pure and undefiled, the very crown of waters."[33]

Callimachus' passage recalls a debated Homeric passage, *Il.* 21.192–7, where Oceanus is said to be the father of all rivers, springs, and the whole sea. This passage has been used allegorically by many poets to symbolise Homer (as πόντος/Ὠκεανός) versus his epigones, an image that was presumably created during Hellenistic times.[34] Therefore, when Callimachus says ὅσα πόντος ἀείδει (106), by πόντος he means Homer.

The water terminology used by Colluthus is not the only element that corroborates this interpretation, however: κελάδοντος also suggests the idea that the poet is inviting the Nymphs to leave the loud river. Noise normally has a negative connotation when associated with the concept of epic. In the above-cited Callimachean passage, Apollo himself explains that the river carries much filth and waste; Colluthus exploits this association to reinforce the idea that he intends to move away from the long and all-comprehensive epic to favour a polished short παίγνιον. Interestingly, this word is used at line 2 with

33 Callimachus' lack of appreciation for imitators of Homer who aim to create a long epic that includes all the elements of the story, and his preference for a brief, refined and pure composition is expressed in *Aet.* 1.21–4 καὶ γὰρ ὅτε πρώτιστον ἐμοῖς ἐπὶ δέλτον ἔθηκα / γούνασιν, Ἀπόλλων εἶπεν ὅ μοι Λύκιος· /...] ἀοιδέ, τὸ μὲν θύος ὅττι πάχιστον / θρέψαι, τὴν Μοῦσαν δ' ὠγαθὲ λεπταλέην, "For, when I first placed a tablet on my knees, Lycian Apollo said to me: 'poet, feed the victim to be as fat as possible, but, my friend, keep the Muse thin'". Harder 2012, 55 noted how Callimachus meant here to emphasise his style—refined and original—rather than his choice of genre, as later poets thought, interpreting the passage as a *recusatio*. See also *AP* 12.43.3–4.

34 Williams 1978, 88–9; Giangrande 1969, 149.

reference to the toys, undoubtedly a ball that the Nymphs leave on the shore before giving themselves to a dance, based on Colluthus' Homeric model, *Od.* 6.100–2. This word also defines light playful poems, as we know from Leon. *AP* 6.322: τήνδε Λεωνίδεω θαλερὴν πάλι δέρκεο Μοῦσαν, δίστιχον εὐθίκτου παίγνιον εὐεπίης. ἔσται δ' ἐν Κρονίοις Μάρκῳ περικαλλὲς ἄθυρμα τοῦτο, καὶ ἐν δείπνοις καὶ παρὰ μουσοπόλοις. We are aware of this also from Philetas, who titled some of his works Παίγνια.[35]

But the poetry-water metaphor was also extremely popular in late antiquity: Claudian employed it in the proem of his *Gigantomachy* (1–17), where he hopes to overcome the difficulties (of the poetic *agon*),[36] to drive his poem to a safe harbour, crossing the dangerous sea of the Alexandrine crowd (the judging spectators), and finally to reach the victory in his contest through the praise of his listeners. This image was then re-elaborated by Nonnus in *Dion.* 13.50–2, by John of Gaza in his ekphrasis of a cosmological painting in the baths of either Gaza or Antioch (1.16),[37] and by Paul the Silentiary in his *Ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia* 444–5.[38] Since Claudian is one of Colluthus' main models, it is possible that our poet meant to allude to him here, too.[39]

35 See also Cat. 50.1–6 *hesterno, Licini, die otiose / multum lusimus in meis tabellis, / ut conuenerat esse delicatos: / scribens uersiculos uterque nostrum / ludebat numero modo hoc modo illoc, / reddens mutua per iocum atque uinum*, "At leisure, Lycinius, yesterday we'd much fun with my writing tablets as we'd agreed to be frivolous. Each of us writing light verses played now with this metre, now that, capping each other's jokes and toasts" (trans. G. Lee).

36 Cameron 1970a, 26 n. 19; Agosti 2005a, 37 and 2006a, 45–6.

37 Lauritzen 2011, 75.

38 Agosti 2006a, 48.

39 For convenience, I group here the main linguistic parallels that I have found between Colluthus and Claudian and that are discussed in this work: Coll. 82–84 Κύπρις μὲν δολόμητις ἀναπτύξασα καλύπτρην / καὶ περόνην θυόεντα διαστήσασα κομάων / χρυσῷ μὲν πλοκάμους, χρυσῷ δ' ἐστέψατο χαίτην—Claud. *Gig.* 45–46 πρῶτα μὲν ἀπλεκέας περόνῃ διεκρίνατο χαίτας / καὶ πλεκτὰς ἔσφιγξε πυκνοῖς περιπλέγμασι σειράς and *Rapt.* 2.15–17 [*Venus*] *illi multifidos crinis sinuator in orbes / Idalia divisus acu; sudata marito / fibula purpureos gemma suspendit amictus*; Coll. 91–93 καὶ πολέμων βασίλειαν ἀεὶ καλέουσιν Ἀθήνην · / μούνη Κύπρις ἄναλκις ἔην θεός. οὐ βασιλήων / κοιρανίην, οὐκ ἔγχος ἀρήιον, οὐ βέλος ἕλκω—Claud. *Gig.* 43 Κύπρις δ' οὔτε βέλος φέρεν, οὐχ ὅπλον; Coll. 94–98 ἀλλὰ τί δειμαίνω περιώσιον ἀντὶ μὲν αἰχμῆς / ὡς θοὸν ἔγχος ἔχουσα μελίφρονα δεσμὸν ἐρώτων; / κεστὸν ἔχω καὶ κέντρον ἄγω καὶ τόξον ἀείρω, / κεστόν, ὅθεν φιλότητος ἐμῆς ἐμὸν οἶστρον ἑλοῦσαι πολλάκις ὠδίνουσι καὶ οὐ θνήσκουσι γυναῖκες—Claud. *Gig.* 50–54 εἶχε γὰρ αὐτή / πλέγμα κόρυν, δόρυ μαζόν, ὀφρῦν βέλος, ἀσπίδα κάλλος, / ὅπλα μέλη, θέλγητρον ἐν ἄλγεσιν· εἰ δέ τις αὐτῇ / ὄμμα βάλοι, δέδμητο, βέλος δ'ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἐάσας / ὡς Ἄρεως αἰχμῇ τῇ Κύπριδος ὤλλυτο μορφῇ; Coll. 130–6 δεῦρο διακρίνων προφερέστερον εἶδος ὀπωπῆς /φαιδροτέρῃ τόδε μῆλον, ἐπήρατον ἔρνος, ὀπάσσαις. / τοῖον

The sort of playfulness to which Colluthus is referring remains to be considered. Colluthus may be alluding to the lack of a propagandistic purpose in this particular poem, composed simply to entertain readers. Παίγνια therefore represents an added element to Colluthus' programmatic incipit; by choosing this technical word, he is aligning his poetry to Callimachus' ideals of playfulness, brevity, and sophistication. Moreover, by indirectly echoing the *Aetia*'s proem, where Apollo visits Callimachus while he is scribbling on his tablets, the reader is also reminded of Hesiod's *Theogony* proem 23–4: αἵ νύ ποθ' Ἡσίοδον καλὴν ἐδίδαξαν ἀοιδήν, ἄρνας ποιμαίνονθ' Ἑλικῶνος ὕπο ζαθέοιο. "And one day they taught Hesiod a glorious song while he was grazing his lambs under holy Helicon". This implicit connection serves the additional purpose of providing a conceptual link to the next part of the poem, in which we meet another shepherd, Paris.[40]

Colluthus has made a statement of his poetics (he intends to follow Callimachus), and the nature of this poem (light, playful and entertaining). He now moves on to describe his role as a poet.

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ἀνηΰτησεν· ὁ δ' ἤπιον ὄμμα τανύσσας / ἦκα διακρίνειν πειρήσατο κάλλος ἑκάστης. / δέρκετο μὲν γλαυκῶν βλεφάρων σέλας, ἔδρακε δειρὴν / χρυσῷ δαιδαλέην, ἐφράσσατο κόσμον ἑκάστης / καὶ πτέρνης μετόπισθε καὶ αὐτῶν ἴχνια ταρσῶν—Claud. *Nupt. Hon. et M.* 110–111 *dum singular cernit / seque probat*; Coll. 155–58 ἡ δ' ἑανὸν βαθύκολπον, ἐς ἠέρα γυμνώσασα / κόλπον, ἀνηώρησε καὶ οὐκ ἠδέσσατο Κύπρις. / χειρὶ δ' ἐλαφρίζουσα μελίφρονα δεσμὸν ἐρώτων / στῆθος ἅπαν γύμνωσε καὶ οὐκ ἐμνήσατο μαζῶν—Claud. *Gig.* 48–50 λεπτὰς δ'εὐανέμοιο ῥαφὰς χαλάσασα χιτῶνος / πορφυρέων οὐ κρύπτεν ὑφ' εἵμασιν ἄνθεα μαζῶν, / ὄμματος εἰς ἄγρην ὡπλισμλενη; Coll. 173 ἀγλαΐην ἐφίλησα, καὶ ἀγλαΐη με διώκει—Claud. *Gig.* 43–44 ἀλλ'ἐκόμιζεν / ἀγλαΐην; Coll. 18 νυμφιδίων Πηλῆος ἀειδομένων ὑμεναίων—Claud. *Rapt.* 2.230–31 *nimbis Hymenaeus hiulcis / intonat*; Coll. 33 γάμων ἀδίδακτος Ἀθήνη—Claud. *Rapt.* 1.35 *inpatiens nescire torum*, and 3. 279 *quid vos experts thalami*; Coll. 40 οὐ Χείρων ἀλέγιζε καὶ οὐκ ἐμπάζετο Πηλεύς—Claud. *Rapt.* 1.137–8 *despexit utrumque / flava Ceres*; Coll. 53 ἀμαιμακέτη περ ἐοῦσα—Claud. *Rapt.* 1.69 *quamvis indocilis flecti*; Coll. 103 λιθοκρήδεμνον—Claud. *Rapt.* 2.179 *scopulis inclusa*; Coll. 126 μήπω πολλὰ καμοῦσαν ἑὴν ἀνέκοπτεν ἀοιδήν—Claud. *Rapt.* 1.271–2 *imperfectumque laborem / deserit*; Coll. 167 οὔπω μῦθος ἔληγεν—Claud. *Rapt.* 1.117 *vix ea fatus erat*; Coll. 318–20 νὺξ δέ, πόνων ἄμπαυμα μετ' ἠελίοιο κελεύθους, / ὕπνον ἐλαφρίζουσα, παρήορον ὤπασεν ἠῶ / ἀρχομένην—Claud. *Rapt.* 3.404–405 *iamque soporiferas nocturna silentia terris / explicuere vices*; Coll. 338 γόον εὔνασον—Claud. *Rapt.* 2.277 *desine funestis animum … curis*; Coll. 340–41 γοεραὶ μὲν ἐπιμύουσιν ὀπωπαί, / πυκνὰ δὲ μυρομένης θαλεραὶ μινύθουσι παρειαί—Claud. *Rapt.* 3.311 *largis nunc imbribus ora madescunt*.

40 Another interesting element that fits into the poetic manifesto as a technical word is 4 ἐς χορὸν Ἰδαίῃσιν ἐπεντύνασθε χορείαις, where Colluthus clearly echoes Call. *h.* 2.8 καὶ ἐς χορὸν ἐντύνασθε, and Mosch. 30, an expression considered equivalent to the almost technical χορὸν ἀρτίζεσθαι ἱστάναι; Bühler 1960 n. *loc.*, and Kotseleni 1990, 115.

At lines 7–8, Paris sets out to sail a sea to which he is unaccustomed, despite being ignorant of matters of the sea: ἀήθεα πόντον ἐλαύνων ἀγνώσσων ἁλὸς ἔργα. Colluthus here echoes Hes. *Op*. 649: οὔτε τι ναυτιλίης σεσοφισμένος οὔτε τι νηῶν. He returns to the concept of the "works of the sea" also in 230 ὅσοις ἁλὸς ἔργα μεμήλει, "those who care about the works of the sea": he could be playing once again with a double meaning, and indirectly referring to Homer's imitators, who insist on writing long epics.

However, the verse has been interpreted[41] as a possible reference to the poet himself. Like ignorant Paris, Colluthus introduces himself as being about to embark on poetic composition, a challenging task at which he is inexperienced. It is possible that Colluthus simply wishes to appear humble about his art. This would be surprising, based on the following consideration: the epyllion is not listed among the works ascribed to him in the *Suda*, in all probability because the compiler was not aware of the poem, as Weinberger and Livrea believe,[42] probably due to a separate transmission of the poem. However, the *Abduction of Helen*'s popularity must have been greater than that of his other poems if we go by the extant manuscripts that transmitted the text to us. Following this logic, we could speculate that this was Colluthus' last work, the one that best showed off his poetic skills, erudition and knowledge of earlier poetry. If we go by this hypothesis, the self-portrait as a poet who was about to explore a territory to which he was not used, ignorant of its "works", seems rather challenging to accept. Colluthus had both the experience and the knowledge of poetic composition. He had already sailed on the sea of poetry (as the *Suda* tells us of works in hexameters), and he was very knowledgeable about its rules (as we assume from both previous epic work and the erudition that he shows in the epyllion itself).

In what other way could Colluthus refer to himself, then, when he alludes to his inexperience and ignorance? Comparing the epyllion itself to his other works, the nature of the topic itself could not have represented the key point: the *Calydoniaca*'s topic is the mythological story of Meleager, and with all probability, the *Persica* had Anastasius' Persian Wars as its subject; therefore, the poet could not have been alluding to a completely new theme with which he had never dealt before. Metre also does not answer the question, as it is reasonable to presume that the *Calydoniaca* and the *Persica*, as well as the ἐγκώμια δι' ἐπῶν, were also written in hexameters. Colluthus could have meant that for the first time he was approaching a παίγνιον, a light poem for entertainment purposes, rather than a politically motivated poem with propagandistic

41 Kotseleni 1990, 68.

42 Livrea 1968a, XIV.

objectives. In fact, in the *Calydoniaca* the poet may have used the story of Meleager's wild boar hunt to celebrate the emperor's achievements, and since the *Persica* and the encomia were clearly composed for propaganda purposes, it seems fair to suggest that the *Abduction* does not share the same function. The epyllion shows off Colluthus' erudition, fine taste and knowledge of poetry, and also aims at making its readers (or audience) smile. Political references are replaced by ironic portraits and unexpected scenes,[43] ensuring that the spirit of the poem is playful and light.

### 1.2 *The Introduction of Paris*

The bucolic feeling continues in this first part of the proem as the narration moves on to give a first sketch of Paris. The very first words that refer to Paris in the epyllion are θεμιστοπόλοιο νοήματα μηλοβοτῆρος (5), "the counsels of the shepherd judge". The representation of Paris as a shepherd is quite consolidated[44] in literature and in the figurative arts, and therefore this characterisation does not come as a surprise. Νόημα is an interesting word choice here, as it conveys the idea of perception, as well as that of planning; later on we will see that Paris rushes to hand the apple over to Aphrodite, smitten by her beauty and by the sight of her naked chest. His decision is solely based on what he sees, the nudity of Aphrodite versus the non-nudity of Hera and Athena, so the lexical choice seems appropriate in this case, where Colluthus is possibly anticipating how the course of events will evolve later in the story. This fits perfectly within a proem that opens and paves the way to the epyllion as a

43 Such as Paris' toilette before his meeting with Helen (231–5), or Aphrodite's invective towards Athena (172–89).

44 *Il.* 24.29; Pind. fr. 6a SM; Bion 2.10; Virg. *Aen.* 7.763; Ov. *Her.* 5 and 16; Luc. *Dear. Iud.* 5: οὐχ ὁρᾷς βοίδια κατὰ τὸν ἐμὸν οὑτωσὶ δάκτυλον ἐκ μέσων τῶν πετρῶν προερχόμενα καί τινα ἐκ τοῦ σκοπέλου καταθέοντα καλαύροπα ἔχοντα καὶ ἀνείργοντα μὴ πρόσω διασκίδνασθαι τὴν ἀγέλην; "don't you see the tiny cattle over here in the direction of my finger, coming out from among the rocks, and someone running down from the cliff, holding a crook and trying to prevent the herd from scattering out ahead of him?" (trans. A.M. Harmon); Lyc. 91 Καὶ δή σε ναύτην Ἀχερουσία τρίβος καταιβάτις πύγαργον οὐ πατρὸς κόπρους στείβοντα ῥακτῶν βουστάθμων ξενώσεται, ὡς πρόσθε κάλλους τὸν θυωρίτην τριπλαῖς, "And you, betrayed sailor, the downward path of Acheron shall receive, walking no more the stables of thy father's rugged steadings, as once when you were arbiter of beauty for the three goddesses"; Christ. 219: ὁ βουκόλος. Colluthus and Christodorus depend on Nonn. *Dion.* 10.312 τηλίκον ἔλλαχε κάλλος ὁ βουκόλος, ὃν σὺ τραπέζῃ and 15.308 ἃ πόσα Δάφνις ἄειδεν ὁ βουκόλος· ἀμφὶ δὲ μολπῇ, which are based on Theocr. 6.1 Δαμοίτας καὶ Δάφνις ὁ βουκόλος (Tissoni 2000a, 177).

sequence of *aetia*, origins and primeval causes:[45] Paris' plans here have a definite and suggested purpose, and represent the key factor in the development of the events that will be narrated, as the consequences deriving from them are terrible and well known. This is why Paris' νοήματα represent Colluthus' first concern when he begins to interrogate the Nymphs.

It also seems quite ironic that Colluthus describes Paris as θεμιστοπόλοιο (5), as θέμις is normally associated with Zeus.[46] The line acquires an even more humorous meaning when, at the end of the verse, we realise that Colluthus is extremely keen to discover the counsels of a μηλοβοτήρ, a judge-shepherd, not Zeus'. Moreover, μηλοβοτήρ, a Homeric hapax[47] also used by Nonnus[48] and Apollonius,[49] seems to be a favourite of Colluthus, as he uses it again to refer to Paris at 158. The word involves a word game in itself, as μῆλον can mean sheep or goat, but also apple and breasts; thus the word can work as "sheep-tender" or "feeder", as well as "breast-tender" or "feeder".

With ἀγνώσσων ἁλὸς ἔργα (8), Colluthus may also be alluding to Paris' ignorance, and not only in matters of the sea,[50] but also with regard to his lack of education. This would fit in well with the overall portrait that the poet gives us of Paris, a suitably dressed shepherd (108–9), unaware of justice (11), scared (δειμαίνοντα 127), and who is mainly associated by Hermes with making cheese (γαῦλον ἀπορρίψας 128). As in Eur. *IA* 573–89, Paris is a weak judge because of his lack of education. Aphrodite's prize then makes him greedy. Meeting Helen means that he becomes possessed by eros, and finally, their affair leads to strife and to the Trojan War. Paris' ignorance may thus be considered as the cause of the feud: if Zeus had given the task to judge the three goddesses to somebody

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45 Paschalis 2008, 139.

46 *Il.* 16.384–93, where Zeus' concern for mortals' rejection of justice is described through its graphic consequences, and 13.4–9, where the father of the gods turns his gaze from the fighting Achaeans to peaceful people like the Musoi, showing that justice is the main driver of his decisions (Constantinidou 1994, 14 and Lloyd-Jones 1983, 1–27); Hes. *Op.* 9 κλῦθι ἰδὼν ἀίων τε, δίκῃ δ' ἴθυνε θέμιστας τύνη· "you, who see and listen, pay attention to me, and with just right make judgements straight": here, the poet invites the Muses to sing the praises of Zeus, the sole administrator of justice. See also Hes. fr. 10a.25 MW θεμιστοπόλοι βασιλῆες. The word appears first in Hom. *h.Dem.* 103; however, Nonnus employs this epithet also, e.g., for the Nymph Beroe (*Dion.* 41.10).

47 *Il.* 18.529; *h.Merc.* 286.

48 Nonn. *Dion.* 5.121; 41.26; 45.160.

49 Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 2.130 and 165, as noted by Giangrande 1969, 149.

50 This is why he rushes to offer sacrifices on the shore prior to his departure (Giangrande 1969, 152).

more educated, perhaps Aphrodite's seductive means would not have been as effective as they proved to be with a naive shepherd.

Colluthus continues, and expands on, the description of Paris at lines 102–26, where Paris is presented as a fully kitted bucolic character: already a shepherd (μηλοβοτῆρος 5, βουκόλος 10 and 88, νομεύς 11), and unaware of the business of the sea (8), his character is now defined as tending his father's flock (104);[51] engaged in pastoral duties, such as counting his cows (105–7); dressed in proper pastoral attire, including a crook (108–10); a maker of music for Pan, who often forgets about his herd (111–21); busy making cheese (128). Finally, he awards Aphrodite a lovely fruit (130), which is more a pastoral prize than the golden apple of the myth.[52] The portrait of Paris shares many features with that of Hymnus in Nonn. *Dion.* 15. 204–219: he, too, tends his flock (207), holds a pastoral crook (208), forgets about his flock (209 and 214–19), and interestingly, is also compared by Nonnus to Anchises (210–12), whose description in Hom. *h.Aphr.* 53–291 is one of Colluthus' main models. The pastoral terminology used by Colluthus echoes that which was employed by Nonnus to describe Cadmus in *Dion.* 1.363–76 and 409–524 to create an impressionistic pastoral picture, which, as well discussed by Harries, represents a pastoral idyll enclosed within the epic gigantomachy narrated in books 1 and 2: Cadmus is also νομεύς (1.373, 412, 505, 2.21), ποιμήν (1.424, 463, 513, 521), αἰπόλος (1.427, 474, 2.3), βουκόλος (1.444, 460, 478, 2.9), βοτήρ (1.376), βούτης (1.387).[53]

Before beginning the description of Paris, Colluthus sets the scene at the foot of Mount Ida (102).[54] In line with the bucolic framework, Paris is first described

51 In *h.Aphr.*, Anchises, too, is found by Aphrodite while tending flocks: 54–5: ὃς τότ' ἐν ἀκροπόλοις ὄρεσιν πολυπιδάκου Ἴδης / βουκολέεσκεν βοῦς, "Anchises who was tending cattle at that time among the steep hills of many-fountained Ida".

52 Harries 2006, 541.

53 Harries 1994, 65–69 on the pastoral features of the Cadmus episode in *Dion.* 1.145–320 and 2.220–659.

54 Colluthus differs here from Ovid (*Her.* 16.53–4 *est locus in mediis nemorosae vallibus Idae / devius et piceis illicibusque frequens*, and in *Ars* 1.684 *colle sub Idaeo*) and Lucian (*Dear. Iud.* 5 μὴ πρὸς ἄκρῳ τῷ ὄρει, παρὰ δὲ τὴν πλευράν), according to whom the contest took place on top of Mount Ida. The expression ἔνθα λιθοκρήδεμνον ὑπὸ πρηῶνος ἐρίπνην (103) derives from Nonnus *Dion.* 14.381–3, and 18.61, but Colluthus could be alluding to Claud. *Rapt.* 2.179 *scopulis inclusa*. The attempt of Montes Cala 1987–88, 109–112 to restore and justify the *lectio difficilior* based on β, Ἰδαίης τρικάρηνον ὑπὸ πρηῶνα Φαλάκρης, "at the feet of a cliff, the peak of Phalacra, for the dances on Ida", did not find much consensus. Colluthus may be reminiscing about Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 1.581: Πηλιάδας δὲ παρεξήμειβον ἐρίπνας,

as tending his father's flock (κουρίζων ἐνόμευε Πάρις πατρώια μῆλα 104), as the shepherd Hymnus in Nonn. *Dion.* 15.206, and the Cyclops in *Od.* 9.127. The choice of κουρίζων reminds us of Zeus again, like θεμιστοπόλοιο, as he is thus described by Apollonius when, still a child, he used to inhabit the Dictaeon cave in *Arg.* 1.508 and 3.134.

Paris' duties as a shepherd involve separating the bulls from sheep (105–7). Colluthus' model for these lines is *Od.* 4.411–13, where Eidothea, Proteus' daughter, reveals her father's habits to Menelaus as she suggests that he hide among the seals in her father's cave, in order to find out from Proteus the reason that is preventing their return: φώκας μέν τοι πρῶτον ἀριθμήσει καὶ ἔπεισιν· / αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν πάσας πεμπάσσεται ἠδὲ ἴδηται, / λέξεται ἐν μέσσῃσι, νομεὺς ὣς πώεσι μήλων, "first of all he will go among his seals and count them, but after he has reviewed them all and noted their number, he will lie down in the middle of them, like a herdsman among his sheep".[55] The choice of this model seems significant on a number of levels: firstly, Paris and Proteus shared a connection with Helen, as the former kidnaps her from Sparta, and the latter, according to the tradition transmitted by Stesichorus and Euripides in the *Electra* and *Helen*, keeps her with him in Egypt, while the *eidolon* is at Troy. Colluthus borrows from this passage πεμπάσσεται (πεμπάζετο 106) and πώεσι μήλων (πώεα μήλων 107). Secondly, Colluthus must have been aware of the importance of Proteus as a programmatic image for Nonnus, who revisits the Homeric passage in the proem of his *Dionysiaca* with programmatic objectives: at 1.11–33 the poet evokes Proteus, whose constant transformations represent his model of *poikilia*. Nonnus asks the Muses to send him Proteus as a companion so that they can join the chorus

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"the heroes sailed along the cliffs of Pelium": here, the first places that the ship Argo sails by are listed in a rapid manner and with an embryonic tendency to "paesaggio interiorizzato" (Paduano 1986, 159). The choice of ὑπερέδραμον somehow contrasts with this dramatic context: in Theognis 1.620 the verb is used to overcome poverty, and it is generally used for metaphorically defeating hardship, never for "run over or surpass" a landmark in a geographic context (*LSJ*, 1869): Colluthus may be ironic, as in this case Hermes and the goddesses have just "overcome" the peak of the mountain, while the reader would expect some form of hardship. Colluthus derives the expression ἐπὶ προχοῇσιν ἀναύρου (105) from Mosch. 31 ἢ ὅτε φαιδρύνοιτο χρόα προχοῇσιν ἀναύρων, "whenever she washed her body at the streams of the river", since this passage (line 30) was also the model for Colluthus' line 4 (Livrea 1968a, 118–9). Moschus in turn depends on Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.67, where Jason crosses the river Anauros, ἐξότ' ἐπὶ προχοῇσιν ἄλις πλήθοντος Ἀναύρου; see also 1.8.

55 The duty of Proteus is reiterated at 450–52: ἔνδιος δ' ὁ γέρων ἦλθ' ἐξ ἁλός, εὗρε δὲ φώκας / ζατρεφέας, πάσας δ' ἄρ' ἐπῴχετο, λέκτο δ' ἀριθμόν. / ἐν δ' ἡμέας πρώτους λέγε κήτεσιν, "at noon the old man came out of the sea and found the fat seals, he reviewed them and counted them again: and he counted us first among the creatures".

that celebrates Dionysus; Nonnus and Proteus perform together side by side to honour the god, and Nonnus mimics what Proteus does in his own style. Nonnus' competition with Homer[56] is organised in a stichomythia in which he demonstrates his expansive mimetic ability on his model (in *Od.* 4.435–59, the six metamorphoses take place in the space of three lines, while Nonnus dedicates three lines to each metamorphosis).[57] Shorrock suggested that, from a direct verbal correspondence that joins the poet and Proteus, Nonnus progresses, by means of association, to suggest that if, in Theocr. *Id.* 1, the goatherd (according to Thyrsis) takes second place to Pan, in the *Dionysiaca* Proteus takes second place to Nonnus, the poet from the city of Pan (Panopolis).[58] By evoking the same Odyssean episode utilised by Nonnus in his proem to suggest programmatic comparisons, Colluthus perhaps means to respond to Nonnus. Paris' Proteus-like features make him a new Proteus, i.e. a new rival who is destined to lose to Colluthus. This foreshadowed defeat fits into the new comparison suggested in the *Abductio*n: as Proteus loses to Nonnus (the new Pan), so Paris (who composes music to Pan at 116) loses to Colluthus, who is in turn singing about Paris. This victory would place our poet above Pan, the god himself: this implied conclusion, which would have important consequences for the programmatic ideals suggested by Colluthus, may seem to lack consistency with the poet's apology to Dionysus at 251, where Colluthus acknowledges the god's superiority. However, Colluthus has already placed Paris (Proteus-Pan) above Dionysus: he only apologises to Dionysus afterwards, thus only recognising the god's superiority on second thought. In summary: Paris sits above Dionysus, and Colluthus sits above Paris, therefore two steps above Dionysus: it is a hazardous logic, but one that may cross a reader's mind when bringing all of Paris' identities together.

56 However, Nonnus' re-elaboration is not as obvious as at first it seems: the rejection of the stench of the seals omits to mention that the daughter of Proteus, Eidothea, neutralised it with a dose of ambrosia, and the alternative symbol he proposes, the Maronian wine, is used by Odysseus to knock the Cyclops out in *Od.* 9.

57 Nonnus also inverts the first two transformations (the lion and the snake): this order is also present in a magical hymn to Helios (PGM 4.939 = 59.3 Heitsch); the order employed by Nonnus is based on the antithesis of war episodes—peace episodes, as explained by Luc. *Salt.* 23, where he says that Homer seems to have divided all things between war and peace; see Gigli-Piccardi 2003, 121–22 n. 17, who also highlights the role of antithesis as a fundamental structural criterion across the whole poem.

58 Shorrock 2008, 102–105.

The mixed nature of Paris' flock (bulls and sheep) has attracted some interest. Colluthus uses the word μῆλα with a different meaning,[59] that is at 104= flocks, and here at 107= sheep.[60] The obvious model for this line is Nonn. *Dion.* 18.94 ταύρων ζατρεφέων ἀγέλην καὶ πώεα μήλων "a herd of fat bulls and a flock of sheep" and Colluthus' line also echoes Claudian once again, in *Rapt.* 1.262–3 *vitales utrimque duas, quas mitis oberrat temperies habitanda viris*, "on either side lay two habitable zones, over which ranged a temperate mildness suitable for men to live in". However, here the first questions about Paris' credibility as a shepherd arise: Paris is a herdsman of sheep and goats, as well as bulls (105, 113, 116), but nowhere else is he portrayed as a βουκόλος of bulls.[61] Magnelli agrees with Harries on Colluthus' lack of concern with harmonising Paris to the bucolic utopia:[62] Harries interpreted this apparent negligence as the poet's intention to create a bucolic impression that did not need to be precise. However, he accepts Fantuzzi and Williams's suggestion that this passage may echo the strange mix of animals that Theocritus' Cyclops boasts of owning (11.34).[63]

It is possible that ταύρων is used here as a synonym of βοῶν, based on Theoc. 1.21, [Theoc.] 27.48 and 71.[64] However, precisely these two passages offer the ground for Prauscello's alternative interpretation.[65] She argues that Colluthus exploits bucolic and Homeric tradition and exegesis where he found a precedent for Paris as herdsman of bulls to evoke a web of associations that foreshadows Paris' aggressive future as rapist, but also to direct readers' expectations and shape his narrative strategies. In fact, in Theocritus bulls are among the wild and untamed animals that join the θρῆνος for Daphnis (1.71–2), and are also mentioned by him in his epitaph (1.120–1). In this passage, where cowherds, shepherds and goatherds gather around suffering Daphnis, Priapus accuses Daphnis of being δύσερως (compare Coll. 194 Δύσπαρις) for failing to seize an opportunity with a girl and thus of lowering himself to the level of goatherds, who only wish they could mount their goats (85–88). The context of this lament reveals how material wealth and amatory success depend on

59 Like οἰοπόλοισιν, meaning "pastoral" at 15 and "lonely" at 357, and ἤθεα, at 11 "familiar place, home", in 115 "customs".

60 As Livrea 1968a, 121 highlights, the distinction between ταύρων= ox/bulls and μήλων= sheep is underlined by the anaphora.

61 Prauscello 2008, 183 and 189 n. 73; Magnelli 2008, 155.

62 Magnelli 2008, 155; Harries 2006.

63 Hunter 1999 on Theoc. 11.34.

64 Magnelli 2008, 168 n. 33.

65 Prauscello 2008, 183–5 and 190 n. 85.

the size of the animals tended. The bull is commonly found as a slang word for phallus. In [Theocritus] 27, one of the very few descriptions of full satisfaction found in ancient literature, Daphnis is cast in the role of the predator, and he is tending bulls. This feature is clearly linked to his sexually predatory attitude towards Helen/Acrotime. Moreover, in *Il.* 11.385, Diomedes addresses Paris as "famous for your *keras*". Scholiasts firstly interpretated this as a reference to a strange hairstyle, but thanks to Eustathius we know that, on the basis of a passage of Archilocus,[66] either Aristotle or Aristophanes of Byzantium read into this a reference to Paris' vaunts of sexual prowess.

While I accept the validity of the sexual allusions, and Colluthus' aim of guiding his reader's expectations, I would stretch this further and argue that the poet's ultimate objective might be, once again, to surprise his readers by failing to fulfil those expectations, and instead providing a new twist, i.e. that Paris' identity is not that of a lover/rapist either. If it is true that everything leads readers to expect a highly sexual character and a lover, it is also true that Paris' identity as a lover is questionable. In fact, when later Athena offers courage to Paris (145), a skill that he definitely needs, and that does not belong to the bucolic world,[67] ironically he turns it down. Then, Hera wonders what use battles are to a king (150): this sounds very odd in Homer's world. Finally, when Aphrodite manages to convince Paris through erotic promises, his evolution into the new role (lover) is revealed. It looks as if Colluthus were making Paris regress back (rather than evolve) to his Homeric role: a coxcomb, a woman-crazy man, a seducer,[68] as also confirmed by Ovid, who, in *Her*. 17.253–4, defines his job specification: *tu, Pari, semper ama*. Our Paris, again, at first glance seems to fit into this characterisation as a lover:[69] he cannot wait to get his prize (167) and burns with desire after the idolised Helen (193), but his credibility as a character who is prey to eros (ἱμείρων δ' ὑπ' ἔρωτι 193) is null compared to that of Helen, who ticks all the boxes of erotic characterisation.[70] He does not present any symptom of eros; he fails to show any emotions at the sight of Helen; he does not comment on her beauty; he does not reciprocate her signals. Perhaps his lack of proper education is to be blamed for his ignorance of love:[71] he is a shepherd who does not know the sea (ἀγνώσσων ἁλός 8) and is told by Hermes to abandon his milking pail as if this

66 Arch. fr. 247 W².

67 Harries 2006, 541–2.

68 *Il.* 3.39 = 13.769 Δύσπαρι εἶδος ἄριστε γυναιμανὲς ἠπεροπευτά.

69 For Magnelli 2008, 154–5, Paris' character is all about sex, in line with the Homeric model.

70 I disagree on this point with Paschalis 2008, 142.

71 See, in contrast, the sentimental *paideia* in the novel (Létoublon 1993, 114–17).

were the symbolic object that represented Paris' world in a nutshell. He joins Athena (γάμων ἀδίδακτος 33 and ἁρμονίης ἀδίδακτος, ὁμοφροσύνης ἀδαήμων 186) in being ignorant of the matters of marriage, especially that mutual understanding that would allow Paris to decode Helen's signals and to respond to them.

Colluthus now proceeds to describe Paris' pastoral attire, with a goat's skin hanging behind him and a crook (108–110), modelling his shepherd on Lycidas from Theocritus 7.15–19:

> ἐκ μὲν γὰρ λασίοιο δασύτριχος εἶχε τράγοιο
> κνακὸν δέρμ' ὤμοισι νέας ταμίσοιο ποτόσδον,
> ἀμφὶ δέ οἱ στήθεσσι γέρων ἐσφίγγετο πέπλος
> ζωστῆρι πλακερῷ, ῥοικὰν δ' ἔχεν ἀγριελαίω
> δεξιτερᾷ κορύναν
>
> In fact he had the reddish skin of a thick-haired billy-goat on his shoulders, still odorous of fresh curd; around his chest an old peplos was fastened by a wide belt, and he held in his right hand a curved crook of wild olive tree.

Colluthus introduces his own twist to Lycidas' portrait, replacing Theocritus' male goat with a female goat. The other significant passage that Colluthus certainly had in mind is the priestly attire of Nonnus in *Dion*. 1.34–8, where the poet takes off his clothes to wear the Dionysiac uniform, consisting of a crook and a fawnskin, symbol of cosmic *poikilia*:

> ἄξατέ μοι νάρθηκα, Μιμαλλόνες, ὠμαδίην δὲ
> νεβρίδα ποικιλόνωτον ἐθήμονος ἀντὶ χιτῶνος
> σφίγξατέ μοι στέρνοισι, Μαρωνίδος ἔμπλεον ὀδμῆς
> νεκταρέης, βυθίῃ δὲ παρ' Εἰδοθέῃ καὶ Ὁμήρῳ
> φωκάων βαρὺ δέρμα φυλασσέσθω Μενελάῳ.
>
> Bring me the stick, Mimallons! And on my shoulders, in place of the usual cloak, throw and tie a dapple-back fawnskin, soaked in the perfume of Maronian nectar; and let Homer and deep-sea Eidothea keep the rank skin of the seals for Menelaus.

The fawnskin is a key garment in the dressing of Dionysus:[72] the god himself wears a thyrsus and a fawnskin as soon as he arrives in Thebes in Eur. *Ba.* 23–25:

> πρώτας δὲ Θήβας τάσδε γῆς Ἑλληνίδος
> ἀνωλόλυξα, νεβρίδ᾽ ἐξάψας χροὸς
> θύρσον τε δοὺς ἐς χεῖρα, κίσσινον βέλος·
>
> In this land of Hellas, I have first excited Thebes to my cry, fitting a fawnskin to my body and taking a thyrsos in my hand, a weapon of ivy.[73]

Nonnus' passage, which emphasises a first-person involvement in the Dionysiac ritual, was widely imitated[74] and becomes functional in the description of Colluthus' Paris as it suggests yet another disguise-transformation, thus contributing to the idea of a Paris-Proteus.

Colluthus also mixes in a reference to another Nonnian passage (where the rare word δορή appears), where some of the satyrs, who were quintessentially cowards already in satiresque drama,[75] are masked in ways that remind us of Heracles: *Dion.* 14.130, οἱ δὲ δοραῖς λασίῃσιν ἐκαρτύνοντο λεόντων, "others made themselves stronger with skins of shaggy lions". He adds an allusion to Ap. Rh. 4.1347–50, where Jason reveals to his crew his vision of three goddesses dressed in goat's skins, *like maidens*. Here, the similarity of the detail of the goat's skin

72 A priest of Dionysus wears a fawnskin also in *Orph.* Fr. 238 Kern.

73 Trans. T.A. Buckley.

74 The author of the *Cynegetica*, in 1.24–7, refuses to dance around Dionysus; Aelius Aristides (41.2 K), about to celebrate Dionysus, declares to be one of the initiated. Gigli Piccardi 2003, 125–6 suggests that the tribute paid by these later authors to Nonnus' passage may gain significance as a response to *loca* such as Clem. *Protr.* 12.119.1 Ἧκε, ὦ παραπλήξ, μὴ θύρσῳ σκηριπτόμενος, μὴ κιττῷ ἀναδούμενος, ῥῖψον τὴν μίτραν, ῥῖψον τὴν νεβρίδα, σωφρόνησον· δείξω σοι τὸν λόγον καὶ τοῦ λόγου τὰ μυστήρια, κατὰ τὴν σὴν διηγούμενος εἰκόνα. Ὄρος ἐστὶ τοῦτο θεῷ πεφιλημένον, οὐ τραγῳδίαις ὡς Κιθαιρὼν ὑποκείμενον, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀληθείας ἀνακείμενον δράμασιν, ὄρος νηφάλιον, ἁγναῖς ὕλαις σύσκιον, "O madman, come, not leaning on the thyrsus, not crowned with ivy; throw away the mitre, throw away the fawnskin; come to your senses. I will show you the Word, and the mysteries of the Word, explaining them after your own fashion. This is the beloved mountain of God, not the subject of tragedies like Cithæron, but consecrated to dramas of the truth".

75 Eur. *Cycl.* 596 and 642.

hanging from the neck downwards around the back and waist[76] is especially striking:

> Κλῦτε φίλοι· τρεῖς γάρ μοι ἀνιάζοντι θεάων,
> στέρφεσιν αἰγείοις ἐζωσμέναι ἐξ ὑπάτοιο
> αὐχένος ἀμφί τε νῶτα καὶ ἰξύας, ἠύτε κοῦραι,
> ἔσταν ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς μάλ' ἐπισχεδόν
>
> Listen, friends; as I lay in my grief, three goddesses covered in goat's skins from the neck downwards round the back and waist, like maidens, stood near, over my head.

Is there a link with the comic (and also cowardly) Dionysus in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, who threw a lion's skin on top of his tunic? Interestingly, the word ὀρεσσαύλοιο, used by Colluthus as a variation on Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 3.33 (on which see below), is used by Nonnus in *Dion*. 24.130, in a passage where the Bassarids act as make-do lionesses: Βασσαρίδων δὲ φάλαγγες Ἐρυθραίῃ παρὰ λόχμῃ σκύμνον ὀρεσσαύλοιο τιθηνήσαντο λεαίνης "in the Eritrean woods troops of Bassarids breastfed the cubs of a mountain lioness".[77]

Is our Paris really dressed as a shepherd? All these passages to which our poet is alluding seem to refer to people in disguise or pretending to be somebody else: Colluthus is ironically dressing Paris in the standard bucolic attire[78] (and yet reminding us of a poet, Nonnus, dressing up as a god, Dionysus), but he does not really believe himself (nor do his readers) that he is actually a shepherd. In other words, he is playing with the genre in a subtle way that educated readers would have understood, displaying the *polyeideia* and the *poikilia* modelled by Proteus, and he is dressing up his character as a shepherd/poet. However, from the rest of the story and from earlier tradition readers would have known that he is actually a coward,[79] a non-achiever, and, at least in this poem, not even a proper lover. Thus, while the passage first brings

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76 Herodotus in 4.189 speaks of goat-skin cloaks and how the Greeks borrowed that style from the Libyan women.

77 Nonnus uses the same word also in 14.378, where a Bacchant grabs the skin of an enraged bull and skins him. In Eur. *Cycl*. 330 δοραῖσι θηρῶν σῶμα περιβαλὼν ἐμὸν "I wrap my body in the skins of beasts"—during the Cyclops' speech to Odysseus about his lack of respect for Zeus.

78 See Miguélez-Cavero 2009a, 570–75 for a similar play with prototypes in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*.

79 On the tradition of dislike for Paris see Magnelli 2008, 152–6; also Lyc. 90–3 and *APl*. 170=*HE* 1951–4, an epigram by Hermodorus on a comparison between the statues of Cnidian Aphrodite and Athena Parthenos.

Lycidas to mind, a closer reading reveals that Colluthus' Paris is only dressed up as a shepherd, but he is actually a fake. The bucolic attire is yet another disguise for ever-changing Paris.

This impression is corroborated by the similarity of Colluthus' Paris with Nonnus' Cadmus, who, in *Dion.* 1.368–76 and 409–524, dresses up as a pipe-playing shepherd to enchant Typhoeus; as mentioned above, this scene is one of Colluthus' main models for the characterisation of Paris, and is also alluded to later on, when Paris plays the pipe. More evidence in favour of this perspective of falsehood is provided by the images that the word χίμαιρα inevitably—as it appears only once in Homer, *Il.* 6.181—evokes. The Chimaera, a polymorphic creature that is many animals, πρόσθε λέων, ὄπιθεν δὲ δράκων, μέσση δὲ χίμαιρα, "was lion in the front part, a snake in the rear part, and a goat in the middle", where the lion may be a reference to Heracles, the snake to Cadmus, and the goat would represent our link to Colluthus' passage. The Chimaera was one of the monsters that Bellerophon was sent to defeat by Proteus. This myth has interesting connections not only with Heracles' myth (the Nemean lion killed by Heracles was the son of Chimaera), but also with Jason's, as well noted by Hunter:[80] both Proteus and Pelias seek to eliminate the better man from their kingdom, employing similar instruments (the Chimaera and the fire-breathing bulls of Aeetes). After the successful completion of the tasks, both Bellerophon and Jason receive what they wanted (in Bellerophon's case, half of Iobates' kingdom, and in Jason's case, the Golden Fleece), and marry the kings' daughters (although only Iobates gives his consent to marriage).

Let us now consider Paris' pastoral crook.[81] Readers continue to be reminded of Heracles by καλαῦροψ (110), which, like the adjective ποιμένιος, is a rare word,[82] and brings to mind two passages in particular: firstly, Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 2.32–4, on

80 Hunter 1988, 448–9.

81 There is debate about the reading ἀπέκειτο (accepted by Mair, Livrea and all other editors) which implies that the pastoral crook was laid aside (as Paris' hands were busy with the pipe that he was playing as he walked), but Giangrande 1969, 150 supports ὑπέκειτο, which would imply that his crook was tied to his belt and thus lay beneath his shepherd's skin (Kotseleni 1990, 188). Livrea disagrees with the mss. version as he interprets it as *humi iacebat pedum*, and defends his position highlighting Colluthus' intention to present Paris more as a singer than a shepherd (Livrea 1991, 564).

82 It is used only once by Homer in *Il.* 23.845: ὅσσόν τίς τ' ἔρριψε καλαύροπα βουκόλος ἀνήρ, "how far as a cattleman throws his crook". However, it appears in Nonn. *Dion.* 15.349, where the shepherd Hymnus asks Nicaea to put not his pastoral crook on his grave, but narcissus flowers; in 16.317, where a satyr invites Pan to become a vine-dresser and quit his pastoral crook; in 15.208, where Hymnus holds a crook in his hands; in 23.158, where some

which Colluthus introduces a twist[83] by replacing ὀριτρεφέος with ὀρεσσαύλοιο: ὁ δ’ ἐρεμνὴν δίπτυχα λώπην / αὐτῇσιν περόνῃσι καλαύροπά τε τρηχεῖαν / κάββαλε τὴν φορέεσκεν ὀριτρεφέος κοτίνοιο, “[Amycus] threw on the floor his dark cloak, double fastened by buckles, and his rough crook, made of mountain olive, which he used to carry around”.[84] Secondly, [Theocr.] 25.207–9 also shares much with Apollonius’ passage, where Heracles is telling Augeas’ son Phyleus about his slaying of the lion of Nemea: ἑτέρηφι δὲ βάκτρον εὐπαγὲς αὐτόφλοιον ἐπηρεφέος κοτίνοιο ἔμμητρον, “and in the other hand a sturdy crook, made, without peeling or pithing, of a shady wild-olive”: here βάκτρον, a synonym of καλαῦροψ, is used.

The image of the pastoral crook is also widely exploited with sexual allusion in Nonnus’ *Dionysiaca*: in 1.79–83, Eros, assimilated to a cattleman, leads Zeus as the bull who kidnaps Europa, and uses his bow like a pastoral crook to drive him towards the marine pastures of the sea:

> τιταινομένοιο δὲ ταύρου
> βουκόλος αὐχένα δοῦλον Ἔρως ἐπεμάστιε κεστῷ
> καὶ νομίην ἅτε ῥάβδον ἐπωμίδι τόξον ἀείρων
> Κυπριδίῃ ποίμαινε καλαύροπι νυμφίον Ἥρης
> εἰς νομὸν ὑγρὸν ἄγων Ποσιδήιον·

> While the bull hurried, Eros like a cowherd whips his neck enslaved by the girdle, and, carrying the bow on his shoulders like a pastoral crook, he leads Hera’s groom with this Cypris’ wand towards the wet pastures of Poseidon.[85]

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of the Telchines lead a bull with a pastoral crook; in 43.216, where Pan hits the sea with his pastoral crook.

83 Apollonius’ περόνῃσι is also exploited by Colluthus at 83, but referred to Aphrodite’s perfumed locks, not to a cloak.

84 The rough appearance of Amycus (who challenges every guest to a boxing match, and kills whoever loses) contrasts with that of Polydeuces, who is wearing a rich cloak received as a gift (note the contrasts here of βία/τέχνη and of barbarian/ Greek).

85 This passage responds to the ekphrasis of a painting of Europa in Ach. Tat. 1.1–2, where the girl holds the horn of the bull like a charioteer holds the reins, and Eros leads Zeus-the bull with a torch in his hand: 1.1.13–1.2.1 Ἔρως, μικρὸν παιδίον, ἡπλώκει τὸ πτερόν, ἤρτητο φαρέτραν, ἐκράτει τὸ πῦρ· μετέστραπτο δὲ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸν Δία καὶ ὑπεμειδία, ὥσπερ αὐτοῦ καταγελῶν, ὅτι δι’ αὐτὸν γέγονε βοῦς. Ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα μὲν ἐπῄνουν τῆς γραφῆς, ἅτε δὲ ὢν ἐρωτικὸς περιεργότερον ἔβλεπον τὸν ἄγοντα τὸν βοῦν Ἔρωτα, “And Eros was leading the bull: Eros, a tiny child, with wings spread, quiver dangling, torch in hand. He had turned to look at Zeus with a sly smile, as if in mockery that he had, for Love’s sake, become a bull.

In 47.401, Ariadne, remembering her mother Pasiphae's passion for a bull, says οὐ μὲν ἐγὼ ψαύσοιμι καλαύροπος, "I will not touch the pastoral crook". The most interesting parallel could be 15.285, where Hymnus, in love with Nicaea, thinks of a speech for her, where he lists shepherds who were loved by divinities such as Tithonus (kidnapped by Aurora), Ganymede (by Zeus) and Endymion (by the Moon): ῥῖπτε βέλος καὶ ψαῦε καλαύροπος, ὄφρα τις εἴπῃ· / '"Ὕμνου μηλονόμοιο βόας Κυθέρεια νομεύει', "Throw away your darts and take the pastoral crook instead, so that one may say: 'It is Cytherea who grazes the cows of Hymnus the cattleman' ". The technique of listing previous *exempla* is used traditionally in pleas of unrequited lovers, as in [Theocritus] 20.32–45. According to D'Ippolito there is a similarity between this list and the one Paris gives to Helen in Ovid, *Heroides* 16.197–204:[86]

> da modo te facilem nec dedignare maritum,
> rure Therapnaeo nata puella, Phrygem.
> Phryx erat et nostro genitus de sanguine, qui nunc
> cum dis potando nectare miscet aquas.
> Phryx erat Aurorae coniunx, tamen abstulit illum
> extremum noctis quae dea finit iter.
> Phryx etiam Anchises, volucrum cui mater Amorum
> gaudet in Idaeis concubuisse iugis.

> Just be condescending: give yourself to me and do not despise a Phrygian husband, you, girl born in the countryside of Therapne. A Phrygian and born from our same blood was he, who now in heaven with the gods mixes water with nectar for their drinks; a Phrygian was the husband of Aurora, and yet the goddess who cuts the night short stole him away; a Phrygian was also Anchises, with whom the mother of the winged Loves prides herself to have joined together on the mountainsides of the Ida!

Colluthus curiously applies this listing technique to the meeting of Helen and Paris, where love is—at least in terms of result—reciprocated, and replaces the list of shepherds with the list of Paris' ancestors (while she lists the heroes

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Though the entire painting was worthy of admiration, I devoted my special attention to this figure of Eros leading the bull, for I have long been fascinated by passion" (trans. J.J. Winkler).

86 D'Ippolito 1964, 97.

that she does know):[87] there may be a subtle game happening here, in which Colluthus uses the word "crook" to allude to Eros' power as in the bull's image. The effect is, once again, surprising, as readers find here something that they would expect in a scenario of unreciprocated love or *paraclausithyra*.

So far, our Paris is really trying to resemble a shepherd, to look like Cadmus who, in turn, pretended to be a shepherd, to look like strong Heracles with his lion skin on, to look like old-fashioned sexy Paris; he also has Proteus-like features and a connection to Pan: unfortunately, a well-read reader could not be deceived and would realise that he is none of the above, or that maybe he is a little bit of all of them.

On closer inspection, the text could offer some clues as to how this bucolic renegotiation should be interpreted. The verb αἰωρέω (109), not used by Homer, is borrowed by Colluthus from Nonnus, who uses it, in *Dion.* 19.265, to describe in detail the dance of Silenus in competition with Maron on the occasion of the funeral games in honor of Staphylus.[88] These games, as Dionysus[89] clarifies in 19.143–57, include poetic[90] and pantomimic contests: when Silenus loses, he metamorphoses into a river. The character of Proteus was traditionally associated with pantomime due to his metamorphic nature.[91] There could then be a subtle allusion to pantomime here, as we have seen above that Colluthus already alluded to Proteus at 106–7. Colluthus' use of the bucolic tradition here could be offering an artful twist to allow us to glimpse into his character, a pantomime dancer, a versatile actor who is able to look like and impersonate (a multifaceted) Paris—the shepherd.

The representation of Paris playing his reed-pipe (111–16, 123 and 125–6), alone,[92] has also raised a few questions since, as the protégé of Apollo, he traditionally plays the lyre. After the judgement, his patron goddess is Aphrodite.[93] This

87 Gonnelli 2003, 210 n. 278 notes how the similarity with the Ovidian passage cannot prove Nonnus' dependence on it.

88 On this passage see Miguélez-Cavero 2009, 264–7.

89 Pantomime was associated with the cult of Dionysus and to death as a form of return to life (Gonnelli 2003, 321).

90 Agosti 2006a, 49 contextualised this passage within the performative and agonistic dimension of late epic poetry.

91 Gonnelli 2003, 319–25, and 382–3.

92 Anchises was also found alone by Aphrodite in *h.Aphr.* 76 τὸν δ' εὗρε σταθμοῖσι λελειμμένον οἶον ἀπ' ἄλλων, and playing the lyre at 79–80 ὁ δὲ σταθμοῖσι λελειμμένος οἶος ἀπ' ἄλλων / πωλεῖτ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα διαπρύσιον κιθαρίζων.

93 Rasch 1913, 50 n. 4.

representation of Paris with the lyre is very common in figurative art, in the *Iliad* and in the *Cypria*, where the version given finds Paris tending his father's flock upon Hermes' arrival. In the version of the myth presented by Euripides, that of Paris exposed as a child on the Ida and living with the shepherd who ignored his origins, the representation of Paris playing a reed-pipe (instead of a lyre)[94] is in line with this version of the story presented in *Hel.* 357–9 and *IA* 576–8. Colluthus follows the literary version of the *Cypria*, but surprisingly he portrays Paris playing the pipe,[95] according to the alternative version of the myth: this seems to be a contradiction, but it could be the twist that by now we would expect from our poet.

In this passage there are some more references to Colluthus' poetics which reveal his intention to be seen as an epic bard and a bucolic singer: the choice of λιγυρός and ἀοιδή (112) echoes Hesiod *Op.* 658, who speaks of a tripod that he dedicated to the Muses of the Helicon ἔνθα με τὸ πρῶτον λιγυρῆς ἐπέβησαν ἀοιδῆς, "where for the first time they introduced me to the harmonious song".[96] The expression is based on *Od.* 12.183 λιγυρὴν δ' ἔντυνον ἀοιδήν, where the sirens "began to sing a harmonious song". Colluthus also purposefully employs the technical expression ἀναβάλλειν μολπήν/ἀοιδήν (116) to define the beginning of the poetic singing, and certainly had in mind Christ. 130, where Stesichorus λιγυρὴν ἀνεβάλλετο μολπήν. This passage is also based on Homer, who employs ὁ φορμίζων ἀνεβάλλετο καλὸν ἀείδειν when Phemius and Demodocus start to sing.[97] Theocritus also used similar expressions related to the bards Damoetas (6.20) and Daphnis (8.71). Nonnus used the same formula when bard Leucus started his song in *Dion.* 24.242. Colluthus also employs διώκω, whose use in a musical and poetic sense is well documented.[98] At 123, Colluthus chooses another technical word, λιγαίνων, which appears only once in Homer in *Il.* 11.685 referred to heralds, but often in Nonnus, once again in singing contexts,[99] e.g. in *Dion.* 7.48–50 οἶδα μέν, ὡς ἐρόεις πέεται γάμος, ἦχι λιγαίνει / Πανιάδος

94 Jouan 1966, 100, and Stinton 1965, 28. The reed-pipe appears in figurative art only in later times (Livrea 1968a, 124).

95 The pipe, Pan's favourite instrument according to Nonnus (*Dion.* 10.389, 17.69, 41.372–73, 42.384, 2.118, and 16.332) is once again mentioned at 115.

96 Also Dion. Halic. *Dem.* 5 καὶ οὔτε τὸ λιγυρὸν ἔοικεν ἐμφαίνειν λάλον οὔτε τὸ κομψὸν θεατρικόν.

97 *Od.* 1.155 and 8.266.

98 Pind. *Nem.* 5.24 φόρμιγγ' … χρυσέῳ πλάκτρῳ διώκων, "chasing the lyra with a golden plectrum"; Simon. fr. 29 Bergk (Pind. fr. 107a.3 Snell) καμπύλον μέλος διώκων "chasing an ode of varied metre"; Pratin. Lyr. fr. 5 page μήτε σύντονον δίωκε μήτε τὰν ἀνειμέναν {Ἰαστὶ} μοῦσαν.

99 Nonn. *Dion.* 13.49, where Nonnus applies it to himself listing the leaders; in 24.230 of bard Leucus; in 25.419 of bard Amphion; in 43.392 of a wedding song sung by Galatea; in 44.12

σύριγγος ὁμόθροος αὐλὸς Ἀθήνης" I know how pleasant is a wedding in which Athena's aulos plays together with Pan's pipe", and of himself in 25.260 ἀλλὰ λιγαίνειν πνεῦσον ἐμοὶ τεὸν ἄσθμα θεόσσυτον, "so inspire my song, infuse me with your divine breath".

Paris is so engrossed in his music that he forgets about his flock: the clausula καὶ οὐκ ἐμπάζετο μήλων (114) is the result of conflation[100] between *Od.* 20.384, ὁ δ' οὐκ ἐμπάζετο μύθων, where Telemachus does not pay attention to the suitors, and Nonn. *Dion.* 15.214 οὐ βοέης ἀγέλης ἐμπάζετο, where it is once again Hymnus who no longer cares for his flock once he falls in love with Nicaea. The effects of music on shepherds are compared to those of love in *Dion.* 1.516–34, where Cadmus' music turns Typhoeus into a pretty young man who is seduced by a girl. The metamorphosis of Typhoeus into a gracious creature leads one to wonder whether music is the only possible education for a shepherd, and remind us of the contrast between Polyphemus' monstruous appearance and his heartache in Theocr. *Id.* 11.

The typical indolence of the person in love, who loses interest in their occupation, goes back as far as Sappho,[101] and had found bucolic application[102] to besotted shepherds in Theocritus,[103] e.g. in 1.52–4:

> αὐτὰρ ὅγ' ἀνθερίκοισι καλὰν πλέκει ἀκριδοθήραν
> σχοίνῳ ἐφαρμόσδων· μέλεται δέ οἱ οὔτε τι πήρας
> οὔτε φυτῶν τοσσῆνον ὅσον περὶ πλέγματι γαθεῖ.
>
> He then with some stalks weaves a nice trap for grasshoppers, joining them with a reed; nor does he care as much for his wallet or for his vines as much as he enjoys his plaiting.

and again in 11.12–14, where the Cyclops, in love with Galatea, forgets about his flock, and later complains about his neglected duties (73–4):

an Amadriad is singing in honour of Dionysus; in 46.302 Apollo sings; in 47.291 of Pan. See Fayant 1997 for the role of music as a source of *mirabilia* in the *Dionysiaca*.

100 Livrea 1968a, 125.

101 Sapph. fr. 102 V γλύκηα μᾶτερ, οὔτοι δύναμαι κρέκην τὸν ἴστον πόθωι δάμεισα παῖδος βραδίναν δι' Ἀφροδίταν, "Sweet mother, I am unable to weave my web: desire for a boy overcomes me at soft Aphrodite's will"; see Pattoni 2005, 253 n. 58.

102 Pattoni 2005, 243 n. 34.

103 In Theocr. 10.1–6, tireless husbandman Milon reproaches Bucaeus, who, being in love, can no longer work as hard as he once did.

ἀγεῖτο δὲ πάντα πάρεργα.
πολλάκι ταὶ ὄιες ποτὶ τωὔλιον αὐταὶ ἀπῆνθον
χλωρᾶς ἐκ βοτάνας

Everything else was for him nonessential. Often sheep returned alone from the green pastures to the stable.

As other behaviours which fit in with the erotic symptomatology, neglecting the flock is also codified by the novel: in Longus, both Chloe and Daphnis lose interest in their flock as soon as they fall in love, as e.g. in 1.10.2: Ἡ μὲν ἀνθερίκους ἀνελομένη ποθὲν ἐξ ἕλους ἀκριδοθήκην ἔπλεκε καὶ περὶ τοῦτο πονουμένη τῶν ποιμνίων ἠμέλησεν, "[Chloe] picked stalks of asphodel from here and there and wove a trap for grasshoppers,[104] and while she was busy with this, she paid no attention to her sheep".[105] Later, in Nonnus' *Dion.* 15.207–14, Hymnus also neglects his sheep,[106] like Anchises before him in *h.Aphr.* 77–80 (this is an interesting detail as the Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite* is one of Colluthus' main models throughout the epyllion):[107] νομίην ἐρατῇσι καλαύροπα χερσὶ τινάσσων / εἰς βαθὺν ἦλθεν ἔρωτα καὶ οὐκέτι τέρπετο ποίμνῃ, / εἴκ̣ελος Ἀγχίσῃ ῥοδοειδέι, τοῦ ποτε Κ̣ύπρις / ἀργεννὴν ἐ̣νό̣μ̣ε̣υ̣εν ὀρεσσινόμων στ̣ί̣χ̣α̣ τα̣ύρων / κεστὸν ἐλαφρίζουσα βοοσσόον· [...] οὐ βοέης ἀγέλης ἐμπάζετο, "while among his loving hands he held his pastoral crook, he fell in the deepest of loves, and he did not care for his flock any longer, like rosey Anchises when it was Cypris who grazed the white rows of the mountain bulls releasing her belt like a sting [...] he no longer cared for his flock".

104 Obvious the Theocritean model for above-mentioned 1.52–4.

105 The topos reoccurs in 1.13.6: τροφῆς ἠμέλει, νύκτωρ ἠγρύπνει, τῆς ἀγέλης κατεφρόνει, "she did not care for food, she spent her nights awake, she did not care for her flock", and 1.17.4 Ἠμέλητο καὶ ἡ ἀγέλη by Daphnis.

106 The influence of novel on late antique epic, especially on Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, has recently been discussed in Frangoulis 2014; see also Frangoulis 2006 for a reading of Cadmus' portrait in Nonnus through the novel lens.

107 *h.Aphr.* 77–80 Ἀγχίσην ἥρωα θεῶν ἄπο κάλλος ἔχοντα. / οἱ δ' ἅμα βουσὶν ἕποντο νομοὺς κάτα ποιήεντας / πάντες, ὁ δὲ σταθμοῖσι λελειμμένος οἶος ἀπ' ἄλλων / πωλεῖτ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα διαπρύσιον κιθαρίζων, "the hero Anchises who was comely as the gods. All the others were following the herds over the grassy pastures, and he, left quite alone in the homestead, was roaming hither and thither and playing thrillingly upon the lyre". There are many analogies between the circumstances of Anchises and Aphrodite's meeting in the hymn with Paris and Helen's meeting; one of them is that like Anchises, Paris was also tending his flocks when Hermes arrived, alone, playing the lyre, and is scared on the arrival of the god.

Like Paris' other behaviours, his negligence also raises some questions regarding the credibility of his pastoral identity: while neglecting the flock is an acceptable behaviour in an erotic context (i.e. when the character is in love), it is certainly not acceptable in a bucolic context in which the character is simply playing music but is not in love. In Theocritus, herdsmen take care of their flocks and care that someone else looks after them while they sing (1.14 and 3.1–5), but Paris forgets about his herd.

On his way home, Paris plays his pipe (115–210): this is the beginning of a section entirely dedicated to Paris' music. Colluthus recycles a formula from Homer (*Il.* 6.511 = 15.268: μετά τ' ἤθεα καὶ νομὸν ἵππων "to the familiar place, pasture of mares") which in the first occurrence is applied precisely to Paris, presented as a proud warrior, in contrast with Colluthus' cowardly character, and in the second example to Hector, another Homeric model of bravery.

When embraced by the magic created by Paris' enchanting music, which silences dogs and relaxes even bulls (117–21), and to which only Echo responds, readers may be reminded of a line of Triph. 477 μοῦνος ἀμοιβαίην ἀνεβάλλετο γῆρυν ἀνοίξας, where "only [Anticlus] opened his lips and tried to answer" to Helen from inside the wooden horse (Odysseus will cover his mouth and suffocate him): the allusion adds an ill-fated taste to the line. However, our poet probably had in mind the passage in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* about Icarius' death, allusions to which occur later in the poem, 47.177–8: μούνη δ' ὑστερόφωνος ἐμὸν κτύπον ἔκλυεν Ἠχὼ / θρήνοις ἀντιτύποισι τεὸν στενάχουσα τοκῆα, "only Echo, late-resounding, heard my screams and listened to your father, responding with funeral songs".

The (un)barking dogs[108] bring us back to the bucolic framework with the allusion to Theocr. 2.35, where Simaetha prepares her spell and says that the bitches are barking in the town, a sign that the goddess Artemis, whom she is invoking, is around. The bellowing bulls do not appear in bucolic poetry but they do in Homer, e.g. in *Il.* 18.579–81, σμερδαλέω δὲ λέοντε δύ' ἐν πρώτῃσι βόεσσι / ταῦρον ἐρύγμηλον ἐχέτην· ὃ δὲ μακρὰ μεμυκὼς / ἕλκετο, "among the first cows two scary lions held a bellowing bull; and he, bellowing loudly, was dragged".[109] However, I suggest that Colluthus meant to allude here in particular to two Nonnian passages: *Dion.* 48.790, where curiously Echo (who appears in

108 The verb is usually employed for dogs (Triph. 611) or wolves (Call. fr. 725 Pf, Theocr. 1.71), Quint. Sm. 12.518, Nonn. *Dion.* 2.253. Exceptionally Apollonius refers it to lions (4.1339) and Oppian (*Hal.* 1.399) to beavers. Dion. Per. 83 and Antip. *AP* 11.31.2 use it for the sea.

109 Also in *Il.* 21.237, about the river Scamander bellowing like a bull, and in *Od.* 10.413 of heifers bellowing.

Colluthus in 119) bellows responding to Aura's labour cries: φθόγγον ἀμειβομένη μυκήσατο δύσθροος Ἠχώ, "disharmonious Echo bellows, responding to the girl who screams loudly" (where Colluthus replaces δύσθροος with ἀντίθροος), and 45.150 ἐμυκήσαντο δὲ ταῦροι, where the miracle of Dionysus' transformation (nowhere else documented) is described (he himself bellowed like an army of nine thousand soldiers in 45.136).[110]

The silence accompanying music and nature's appreciation is popular in Greek epic poetry: Euphemia, the invitation to silence, is a ritual topos that normally precedes the arrival or the epiphany of a god.[111] In Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina*, which shares many features with Colluthus' epyllion, Ceres' arrival is also accompanied by nature's silence in 1.209–13, as is Zeus' speech to Mercury in 1.84–8. However, the presence of Echo responding to Paris' music strongly contrasts with such an almost religious scenario, as it evokes four of the most violent episodes (two murders and two rapes) of Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*: in 4.327 she imitates the cries of Philomela, who had been raped and deprived of her tongue so that she could not tell her sister about the violence; in 15.389 she cries for the death of Hymnus, killed by Nicaea who had rejected him; in 47.177 Icarius tells his daughter Erigone that only Echo heard his screams while he was being killed by drunken peasants, and now she responds to her funeral lamentations; and in 48.790, as seen above, she bellowed in response to Aura's labour cries. Nonnus lingers in morbid detail in each of these episodes: with Philomela, the gush of blood that pours from her severed tongue flows mixed with that of her lost virginity, and the tears of the girl are paradoxically responded to by Echo (who, in turn, has lost her voice after lamenting the death of her beloved Narcissus). After the murder of the shepherd Hymnus, shot in cold blood by Nicaea, nature and the gods take part in a long funeral

110 This simile is a Homeric topos (Accorinti 2004, 418).

111 Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 2.159–63, where nature enjoys the Argonauts' singing and lyre playing: ξανθὰ δ' ἐρεψάμενοι δάφνης καθύπερθε μέτωπα / ἀγχιάλου φύλλοις, τῇ περ πρυμνήσι' ἀνῆπτο, / Ὀρφείῃ φόρμιγγι συνοίμιον ὕμνον ἄειδον / ἐμμελέως, περὶ δέ σφιν ἰαίνετο νήνεμος ἀκτή/ μελπομένοις, "and with their blond heads crowned with laurel—the laurel that was on the shore, and to which they had tied also the ropes of ship Argo—they sang harmoniously an hymn to the sound of Orpheus' cithara, and the windless shore rejoiced at their song"; Call. *h*. 2.17–19 εὐφημεῖτ' ἀίοντες ἐπ' Ἀπόλλωνος ἀοιδῇ. / εὐφημεῖ καὶ πόντος, ὅτε κλείουσιν ἀοιδοί / ἢ κίθαριν ἢ τόξα, Λυκωρέος ἔντεα Φοίβου. "Be silent as you listen to Apollo's song: even the sea is silent, when the bards sing the cithara or the arrows, instruments of Lycoreus Phoebus"; Pind. *Pyth*. 1.5–12; Eur. *Ba*. 1084–5; Ar. *Th*. 43; *Av*. 777–8; Theocr. 2.38; Limen. *Delf. Paean*. 2.7–10 (references from Cuypers' commentary to *Arg*. 2).

lamentation which is structured traditionally with refrains.[112] In the violent death of Icarius, wounds are described with an abundance of bloody images as his body lies on the dust. The tale of the rape of Aura, who, like Philomela and Nicaea, wanted to preserve her virginity, is probably the most challenging to read,[113] as the girl not only has to suffer the violence committed by Dionysus with trickery (she is intoxicated with wine and falls asleep),[114] but has then to deal with an unwanted pregnancy and a painful, prolonged, and unassisted labour (Artemis, who traditionally protects women in labour, is here seeking revenge and thus delays the birth of the twins);[115] the girl cries because of her physical pain as well as her misfortune, then seeks to kill her children in an unappeasable rage, and ends up killing herself.[116]

Echo's presence in Colluthus' passage (119) could be interpreted as ironic: the scene of Paris playing music to Pan has no violent connotation at all, unless of course we think of the outcome of the story. The allusion to Echo cannot only be interpreted as a literary cliché, but has deeper roots in her role, analogous to that of the crying figures who repeated, in traditional funeral lamentations, the words of the *princeps planctuum*, following a pre-established script for the situation.[117] Colluthus' intention was to simply build an ironic scene in

112 The obvious models are Theocritus 1.71-5, where wolves, lions and other animals cry for the death of Daphnis, Bion's *Epitaphius Adonis*, and the *Dead Adonis*; see Gonnelli 2003, 222–3. According to Harries 1994, 74 this is the last episode of bucolic poetry in the *Dionysiaca*: Nonnus moves more towards a soteriological approach. For instance, Dionysus grows up only after the bucolic words/Hymnus (which at the beginning of the poem helped Cadmus to defeat Typhoeus) have failed.

113 According to Lightfoot 1998, 295, Aura's story is a scaled-up version of that of Nicaea. For the overall interpretation of the rapes of Aura and Nicaea as reflections of the contemporary contempt of sexuality, marriage and motherhood promoted by the early Christian lives of female martyrs, see Hadjittofi 2008.

114 However, Dionysus ensures she cannot defend herself by taking the extra measure of binding her hands and feet; see Lightfoot 1998, 296–300 for the sources on and the significance of binding and use of wine in the two tales of Nicaea and Aura.

115 According to Nonnus, Aura had mocked Artemis' breasts while they were swimming after a hunting session. Artemis asked Nemesis to punish her for her arrogance.

116 The hatred of Aura for her children, who are the outcome of the rape, is also evident from her refusal to breastfeed them (a panther will suckled on her chest—*Dion*. 48.913—, and the twins will eventually be fed by Athena's manly chest in 48.955–57); see Lightfoot 1998, 294 and 305, with connections to the Orphic poems, where Demeter does not breastfeed Persephone (the result of her rape by Zeus) either (*Orph*. Fr. 58 K). Note, in contrast, Aphrodite's pride in flaunting her breasts to Paris in Coll. 155–58.

117 Bonadeo 2002, 144.

which Echo is responding for once not to screams and cries, but to pipe music. Moreover, as the line brings to mind the above-mentioned scenes of murder and rape, he may have intended to paint a peaceful bucolic scene, while the imagination of the reader would travel by contrast to violent scenes of the opposite nature.

Loneliness is a key factor joining Paris and Echo: just as Echo is answered by herself alone, so Paris enjoys his music alone and does not respond to another shepherd, as often happens in pastoral tradition. This shared feature may suggest, on the one hand, that Paris' musical skills are not good enough to engage with a companion/rival, perhaps in view of a poetic contest; on the other hand, Paris' self-contained musical amusement can also suggest that his only means of socialisation are Echo's answers.

Echo was also one of the Nymphs loved by Pan: the fact that she is echoing music composed by Paris for Pan may also play a role. In Nonn. *Dion.* 8.24–5, heavily pregnant Semele, Dionysus' mother-to-be, is attracted by Pan's music to go outside and to sing along to the melodies: πολλάκι ποιμενίην ὑπὸ δειράδα θυιάδι φωνῇ / Πανὶ μέλος συνάειδε καὶ ἔπλετο σύνθροος Ἠχώ, "often at the feet of hilly pastures with a possessed voice she sang along Pan's melodies, and in repeating them she became Echo". The line evokes epic singing and inspired poetry that reconnects Paris' song directly to that of Pan again (116). The presence of ἀντίθροος (119) in Colluthus may be metapoetic: like Echo, who echoes the crying and lamentation of others, so the poet echoes and responds to previous models. Also in Nonn. *Dion.* 16.334–5, in a monologue in which he blames Dionysus for using his vine to steal the virginity of any girl he fancies, Pan complains that Echo is repeating the songs of Syrinx, who, like Echo, had rejected him: τὸ δὲ πλέον ἠθάδι μολπῇ/φθεγγομένης Σύριγγος ἀμείβετο σύνθροος Ἠχώ. "what is more, Echo responds in concord to the usual song of Syrinx".[118] In 32.130–1, Nonnus tells of Dionysus' madness, during which he wanders in the lonely woods, where Echo stops resounding the songs of Pan, but instead repeats the discordant but dominant bellowing of Dionysus:[119] Πᾶνα δὲ καλλείψασα καὶ ὑστερόφωνον ἀοιδὴν / φθόγγῳ μαινομένῳ μυκήσατο δύσθροος Ἠχώ, "abandoning Pan and his repetitive songs, Echo bellows squeaking at that maddened sound, returning a wild echo that imitates Dionysus".

Orsini was surprised that Colluthus failed to import the dramatic adjective ὑστερόφωνος, emotionally loaded as it refers to the cries of Icarius, which are heard too late by Echo, from 47.177,[120] but he fails to appreciate Colluthus'

118 Pan also wishes he were Dionysus and could conquer girls so easily.

119 According to Agosti 2004, 439, this is a stretched witticism.

120 Orsini 1969, 21–2.

linguistic pastiche, created by mixing four Nonnian passages: he re-employs μούνη at 118 from 47.177 (on Icarius' death), and ἀντίθροος at 119 (which also echoes ἀντιτύποισι from the previous passage) from 13.414 (where the Pleiades' cries are multiplied by Echo), which also becomes his *variatio* on σύνθροος of 8.25 and δύσθροος of 48.190.

The image of the bulls bending their heavy flanks and sleeping on the green grass (120–21) appears as an interesting double allusion to Nonn. *Dion.* 48: in 260–1 it is Aura who rests on the grass with her back against a trunk, before mocking Artemis' chest, while in 761 the adjective βαρύγουνος (often used by Nonnus),[121] is applied to heavily pregnant Aura, here in turn mocked by Artemis: ἡ πρὶν ἀελλήεσσα, πόθεν βαρύγουνος ὁδεύεις, "you, once storm-swift, why do you walk on heavy knees?" The adjective curiously contrasts with *Il.* 6.505, where Paris is described as ποσὶ κραιπνοῖσι πεποιθώς, "trusting in his fast feet", and with the slow pace that Paris will demonstrate later on in the story, failing to rush to Helen. There may also be an allusion to a simile in Ap. Rh.[122] *Arg.* 1.575–8 ὡς δ' ὁπότ' ἀγραύλοιο μετ' ἴχνια σημαντῆρος / μυρία μῆλ' ἐφέπονται ἄδην κεκορημένα ποίης / εἰς αὖλιν, ὁ δέ τ' εἶσι πάρος, σύριγγι λιγείῃ / καλὰ μελιζόμενος νόμιον μέλος, "And as when in the track of the shepherd, their master, countless sheep, replete with grass, return to their stables, and he goes before playing a pastoral tune on his shrill reed".

Paris appears scared when, under a shelter or high roof of trees, messenger Hermes arrives (122–4, 127). Livrea, on the basis of coherence with 17 and of its heavy presence in Nonnus,[123] prefers the reading from β ὑψιλόφοιο, "high-peaked", versus ὑψορόφοιο transmitted by M, "high-roofed"; however ὑψορόφοιο appears normally with reference to θάλαμος, and, in particular, refers to Helen's

121 Nonn. *Dion.* 4.306, where the Pythian oracle says to Cadmus εὐνήσει βαρύγουνον ἑὸν πόδα δαιμονίη βοῦς, "the divine cow will rest her tired feet"; full list of occurrences in Livrea 1968a, 128.

122 Also 4.1423–5 καὶ δὴ χθονὸς ἐξανέτειλαν / ποίην πάμπρωτον, ποίης γε μὲν ὑψόθι μακροί / βλάστεον ὅρπηκες, "first of all they grew grass from the ground, and, above the grass, tall shoots rose up", where the Hesperides take pity on the thirsty Argonauts.

123 See Livrea 1968a, 128–9. Livrea also questionably resolves (and defends, in Livrea 1991, 564, against the attack of Giangrande 1969, 151) the discrepancy between Hermes appearing alone and the plural θεῶν at 124 with printing the *reading* θέων, a hint to Paris' intention to run away in fear.

thalamus in *Od.* 4.121. This element suggests a potential ironic allusion in our poem that Livrea is not too eager to consider.[124]

Ἑρμάωνα διάκτορον (123)[125] echoes the Homeric formula διάκτορος Ἀργειφόντης (which occurs seven times in the *Iliad* and six times in the *Odyssey*).[126] The choice of διάκτορον (123) represents possibly the only textual occurrence in which we may glimpse Colluthus' knowledge of Christian literature: the word is used with its double meaning of messenger and servant also by Nonnus, but in one case the secondary meaning from the Biblical tradition of "Jesus as παῖς θεοῦ" (son and servant of God) is added, and also the tradition of the sovrapposition Hermes-Gabriel-Jesus: *Par.* 5.21–2: κοίρανε, νουσοκόμοιο φιλοστόργοιο χατίζω· / οὐ γὰρ ἔχω τινὰ φῶτα διάκτορον vs John κύριε, ἄνθρωπον οὐκ ἔχω.[127] Polysemantic value is added here to Homeric language; the terminology, typical of Biblical exegesis, can be applied to late antique epic, where Homeric language is enriched with new allegorical meanings. For Agosti, this can only work in a text of ideological content (such as, in fact, Nonnus' *Paraphrasis*), but it cannot work in a mythological work (such as the *Dionysiaca*).[128] It is possible that Colluthus is here consciously playing with this word: the *Dionysiaca* are among his main models, thus it would seem unlikely that he did not know the *Paraphrasis* at all. However, no other instances of allusions to Christian words or contents have been detected in the *Abduction*; therefore, the question remains open.

Paris' fear has been seen[129] as an ancient element derived from the *Cypria*, as it is not featured in Eur. *Andr.* 274–92 nor in Soph. fr. 511 Pearson. However, Paris is quite scared in Lucian *Dear. Iud.* 5.7.10, and in Ov. *Her.* 16.65 *obstipui gelidusque comas erexerat horror*, "I was mute, and chill tremors had raised my hair on end":[130] in this passage we also have silence, like earlier when Paris was playing.[131] The reason for this fear has been justified with Paris' awareness of the gap between his rustic origins[132] and the goddesses', well documented in

124 Livrea 1991 rejects the overall interpretation of Colluthus as "umorista" offered by Giangrande 1968.

125 Line 122 in both Orsini and Livrea editions.

126 Also Ἑρμείαο διακτόρου in *Od.* 12.390 and 15.319.

127 Agosti 2005, 24–5.

128 Agosti 2005, 21–2, and 2001.

129 Stinton 1965, 11 and Livrea 1968a, 129.

130 Trans. G. Showerman.

131 Anchises also looks away from Aphrodite once he realises she is a goddess in *h.Aphr.* 181–3.

132 Eur. *Hel.* 357–9 θῦμα τριζύγοις θεαῖσι / τῶι τε σήραγγας Ἴδας / ἐνίζοντι Πριαμίδαι ποτ' ἀμφὶ βουστάθμους, "as a sacrifice to the three goddesses and to the son of Priam, who once sat

literary tradition and figurative arts.[133] Giangrande, in particular, stretched the text too far in pushing Hermes to catch a glimpse of Paris' cloak, which would have smelt of cheese based on the association of ὀρεσσαύλοιο δορὴ χιμαίρης (108) with Theocr. 7.15–9, and to thus hint, with γαυλόν (128), at Paris' dairy activities. However, Livrea demonstrated the deficiencies of such an interpretation, which would also imply the threefold duty of shepherd, pipe-player and cheese-maker.[134] I read Paris' fear as another fitting element of his cowardice; his features escape a precise definition, but his lack of drive, on the contrary, appears clearly from his weak credibility as Helen's suitor and his disengagement from her.

Paris' reaction to the sight of the gods is to lean his pipe against an oak[135] and abruptly interrupt his song (125–6).

Colluthus' most likely model is, once again, the episode of Cadmus and Typhoeus in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*: firstly, Cadmus, dressed up as a shepherd

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on the hollows of Ida, near the ox-stalls"; *Hec*. 644 ἐκρίθη δ' ἔρις, ἂν ἐν Ἴδαι κρίνει τρισσὰς μακάρων παῖδας ἀνὴρ βούτας, ἐπὶ δορὶ καὶ φόνωι καὶ ἐμῶν μελάθρων λώβαι, "The strife the shepherd decided on Ida, between three daughters of the blessed gods, brought as its result war and bloodshed and the ruin of my home"; *IA* 180–4 Πάρις ὁ βουκόλος ἂν ἔλαβε / δῶρον τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας, / ὅτ' ἐπὶ κρηναίαισι δρόσοις / Ἥραι Παλλάδι τ' ἔριν ἐρινμορφᾶς ἁ Κύπρις ἔσχεν, "whom Paris the herdsman carried off from the banks of reedy Eurotas, his gift from Aphrodite, when that queen of Cyprus entered beauty's contest with Hera and Pallas at the gushing fountain", and 1291–309 μήποτ' ὤφελες τὸν ἀμφὶ / βουσὶ βουκόλον τραφέντ' / Ἀλέξανδρον οἰκίσαι / ἀμφὶ τὸ λευκὸν ὕδωρ, ὅθι κρῆναι / Νυμφᾶν κεῖνται / λειμών τ' ἔρνεσι θάλλων / χλωροῖς καὶ ῥοδόεντ' / ἄνθε' ὑακίνθινά τε θεαῖς δρέπειν· ἔνθα ποτὲ / Παλλὰς ἔμολε καὶ δολιόφρων Κύπρις / Ἥρα θ' Ἑρμᾶς ὁ Διὸς ἄγγελος / ἁ μὲν ἐπὶ πόθωι τρυφῶσα / Κύπρις, ἁ δὲ δορὶ Παλλάς, / Ἥρα δὲ Διὸς ἄνακτος / εὐναῖσι βασιλίσιν, / κρίσιν ἐπὶ στυγνὰν ἔριν τε / καλλονᾶς, "Would that he never had settled Alexander, the herdsman reared among the herds, beside that water crystal-clear, where are fountains of the Nymphs and their meadow rich with blooming flowers, where hyacinths and rose-buds blow for goddesses to gather! Here one day came Pallas and Cypris of the subtle heart, Hera too and Hermes messenger of Zeus; Cypris, proud of the longing she causes, Pallas of her prowess; and Hera of her royal marriage with king Zeus; to decide a hateful strife about their beauty" (translations E.P. Coleridge;) also 573–89.

133 Livrea 1968a, 130.

134 Giangrande 1969, 151 (reinforcing Giangrande 1968, 530) and Livrea 1991, 565.

135 The oak is normally associated with Zeus in Homer,[136] but Colluthus meant to allude to Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 1.537, where the departure of the ship Argo is accompanied by the prodigy of the yelling harbour and of the speaking wood-beam that comes from Dodona, home to a famous oracle of Zeus, which Athena had put in the ship's hull (the wood eventually speaks in *Arg*. 4.580–84).

and playing music, is afraid of Typhoeus (ἅτε τρομέων 1.420) so much that the monster notices it (τί τρομέεις με; 1.427). Then it is Typhoeus' turn: mesmerised by Cadmus' pipe playing,[136] he suddenly wakes up from the spell and frantically searches for his thunder: ἀλλὰ καλυπτομένου νεφέων σκιοειδέι μίτρῃ / ἔμπνοος εὐκελάδοιο δόναξ σίγησε νομῆος / ἁρμονίην τ' ἀνέκοψεν, "but as soon as shadow of the blanket of clouds wrapped that melodious shepherd, his flute fell silent, and the harmony was interrupted" (2.20–2). The allusion to such an important moment—that of the battle between Zeus and Typhoeus—adds to the drama of the moment and enhances Paris' fear. The idea of a chorus of pipes[137]—χορὸν εὐκελάδων δονάκων (125) echoes Ar. *Nub.* 312 εὐκελάδων τε χορῶν ἐρεθίσματα, "the excitement of melodious choruses." Here, the chorus is introducing itself and singing a song about the Eleusinian mysteries, life and death: evoking Aristophanes, Colluthus may be anticipating the outcome of what is happening now.

With "the song that had not been laboured much yet" (μήπω πολλὰ καμοῦσαν ἑὴν ἀνέκοπτεν ἀοιδήν 126), Colluthus once again alludes to Paris' musical skills: the shepherd, whose music was only responded to by Echo, has not had enough time to practice, interrupted by Hermes' arrival. The poet may also be making another clear poetic statement: "his song". As Giangrande clarified,[138] a Hellenistic debate[139] pitted, on one side, Hesiod and later Philetas, who thought that poetry came out of the inspired shepherd's lips without any intervention. The poet was thus a simple means of transmission: Hesiod *Th.* 39: φωνῇ ὁμηρεῦσαι, τῶν δ' ἀκάματος ῥέει αὐδὴ, ἐκ στομάτων ἡδεῖα "[the Muses] with concord voice; unwearying the sound flows sweet from their mouths". On the other side are Theocritus and obviously Colluthus, who think that poetry is artistically elaborate and civilised. Paris is forced to stop his song at the sight of the gods; therefore his song had not been fully composed.

136 He had been summoned by Zeus to cheat Typhoeus, and dressed by Pan as a shepherd for the occasion.

137 Χορὸν εὐκελάδων δονάκων (125) does not represent an unicum in epic poetry (Giangrande 1969, 151), as Livrea 1968a, 131 argues based on Xenoph. *Oec.* 8.20 χορὸς σκευῶν, Galen. *Us. Part.* 11.8 χορὸς ὀδόντων and Ach. Tat. 8.6.4, who defined the pipe a τῶν καλάμων χορός. ("the set of musical reeds", i.e. "set of pipes"): similar expressions are in Opp. *Hal.* 1.621: ὑψιπετὴς γεράνων χορὸς ἔρχεται ἠεροφώνων, […] τῇσι δ' ἄρ' ἱπταμένῃσι κατὰ στίχας, "there comes the high-flying chorus of clanging Cranes … flying in ordered ranks".

138 Giangrande 1969, 151, contradicting Livrea 1968a, 131, who claimed that the line could not be understood without the reference to Hesiod.

139 Giangrande 1968, 511–33, dismantled by Livrea 1991, 564–5.

Once again the striking parallel with Claudian hints at the possibility that Colluthus may have read and thus may be imitating the Alexandrian poet: upon the arrival of the Minerva and Diana, Proserpina also leaves her weaving work unfinished in *Rapt.* 1.268–71: *coeperat et vitreis summo iam margine texti / Oceanum sinuare vadis; sed cardine verso / cernit adesse deas inperfectumque laborem / deserit*, "Now arrived at the tapestry' edge, she began to trace Ocean's glassy shallows; when she saw the door turning on its hinges, and the goddesses approaching, she left her work unfinished."

It has been suggested that this passage of Claudian (1.245–74) may have been the model for the scene of Harmonia and Aphrodite in Nonn. *Dion.* 41.294–310;[140] in fact, Harmonia drops the shuttle and the warp of the tunic that she is weaving, when Aphrodite goes to visit her: καὶ θεός, ὡς ἤκουσε, μίτους ῥίψασα χιτῶνος. / θέσκελον ἱστοπόνων ἀπεσείσατο κερκίδα χειρῶν 305–306. Here, the similarities between the details of the fabric woven by Proserpina and Harmonia (they both weave the earth, the sky, and the stars), the abrupt interruption of the work, and the linguistic choices correspond: in particular, Claud. 1.269-70 *coeperat et vitreis summo iam margine texti / Oceanum sinuare vadis*—Nonn. 301–302 καὶ πυμάτην παρὰ πέζαν ἐυκλώστοιο χιτῶνος / ὠκεανὸν κύκλωσε περίδρομον ἄντυγι κόσμου, "at the very edge of the artfully-woven tunic she had traced the Ocean in a circle running around the orbit of the world". Colluthus transfers the idea of unfinished work from the textile to the musical world, describing Paris' unfinished song as Proserpina's and Harmonia's unfinished tunic. On the basis of the earlier considerations about the potential allusion to Paris' lack of practice, this cross-reference may be slightly ironic as it reveals a contrast between the elaborate and artful textiles woven by Proserpina and Harmonia, and Paris' half-done, unchallenged, unheard song.

However, it should be noted that the expression πολλὰ καμοῦσαν also appears in some ironic contexts, as in Nonn. *Dion.* 25.197 (of Heracles who with "much effort"[141] kills the Lerna), and in an erotic context in Ruf. *AP* 5.75 where the poet, after much work, succeeds in conquering the girl he was pursuing.

It is perhaps useful at this point to briefly survey the nature of Colluthus' connection with Claudian; the textual references in the *Abduction* closely suggest such a connection, but this does not exclude the possibility that Colluthus may have employed other Latin models. We can certainly assume that Colluthus was familiar with Latin, the knowledge of which was widespread among pro-

140 Braune 1948, 184, who also argues that Claudian was the model for the whole story of Beroe.

141 The poet is here ironic, as Heracles was helped in this task, while Dionysus acted alone.

fessional poets and bureaucrats of Roman Egypt.[142] Above all, Catullus 64 could also have been a generic model for Colluthus, who shares an interest in allusive complexity; the possibility that our poet may have engaged with the Latin poet certainly needs further research. A number of parallels suggest a strong relationship between the two texts. Evidence of Claudian as a model, which had been cautiously hinted at by Livrea[143] (as is advocated in my work), would lead to important conclusions within the broader field of the relevance of Latin models for late Greek epic poets. James and Lee, in their edition of Quintus' *Posthomerica* 5,[144] strongly advocate Quintus' direct imitation of Ovid, and suggest that what seem like vast discrepancies between Quintus and Virgil are not caused by the poet's ignorance of his source, but rather constitute part of a "well-considered 'political' scheme to ignore the Romans' national epic and supplant it with a Greek account of the end of the Trojan War, viewed from the Greek perspective. In this fight it may also be significant that the Roman author to whom Quintus does pay tribute, Ovid, is by no means an exemplary representative of the Great Imperial Idea".[145] The debate around the possible dependence of late Greek poetry on Latin models generated much interest and led to further scholarship. However, even Gärtner's work on Quintus' *Posthomerica* and the *Aeneid*[146] does not offer a clear position on the issue of the author's dependence on Virgil. Gärtner takes a position in favour of direct influence only on two instances: in Quintus' description of the testudo used by the Greeks against the Trojans at *Posthomerica* 11.358ff. (=*Aen.* 9.505–17 and 2.440–50), and in the similarities analysed between *Posthomerica* 12 and *Aeneid* 2. For the majority of possible parallels, Gärtner adopts a much more cautious approach, either ruling out influence, or suggesting that influence is unlikely, with Francis Vian.[147]

The characterisation of Paris suggests that Colluthus, like Nonnus,[148] had an impressionistic (and therefore visual) aim; the poet meant to create an

142 Evans 2012; Dupaw 2012; Benaissa 2012 (more specifically on education and literary culture in Greek).

143 Livrea 2000.

144 James and Lee 2000, especially on lines 180–317, 180–236, and 237–90. Their position is in line with Keydell and Erbse.

145 Cuypers 2005a, 607.

146 Gärtner 2005.

147 Maciver 2009.

148 Harries 1994, 65–69 and 76 interprets the death of Hymnus in Nonnus as the death of the bucolic world, where wine is the new instrument replacing pastoral music. The lack of precision, especially with regard to the instruments that Nonnus attributes to Cadmus

impression of a bucolic scene, with as many details as possible,[149] but was unconcerned with accuracy in re-creating the stereotype. Paris' characterisation as a bucolic type is not entirely convincing, but perhaps being convincing is not the poet's aim:[150] Paris likes to play his pipe and looks like a herdsman,[151] but this does not mean he shares all the values of the pastoral world, and, just to mention some of his "downfalls", he tends a strange mixed herd of sheep and bulls, plays the pipe instead of the lyre, and forgets about his flock. His characterisation as the Homeric sexy Paris is equally unconvincing and fails to meet a perfect match. The numerous allusions to other potential identities (Heracles and Jason) also do not work as credible parallels, but they rather substantiate the image of a polymorphic character (Proteus), who can be many people: a shepherd, a lover, a king, a hero, a pantomime dancer.[152] Colluthus could be preparing his readers for the Homeric Paris to come, preventing them from a precise identification of his character, as Apollonius did with his Jason and Medea.[153] The purpose of this ambiguity is to deceive and enchant (δόλος and θέλξις), as is always the case in pastoral poetry: in an epigram attributed to Theocritus, the song of a shepherd will enchant (θέλξει).[154] In Nonnus' gigantomachy (*Dion.* 1–2), the power of this enchantment (created by the pastoral idyll of false shepherd Cadmus) needs to be stronger than the violence and the chaos deriving from the battles among Typhon and Zeus.[155] In contrast, in Colluthus the reader is surprised and projected into the pastoral world before

playing in Book 2, or to the type of animals he tends, for instance, is not relevant as the poet seeks to build an impression in his reader's imagination.

149 Harries 1994, 67–9.

150 Magnelli 2008, 155.

151 Similarly, Paris likes to carry his weapons and surround himself with women who admire his beauty rather than his courage in war; Hector rouses him for this and urges him to battle in *Il.* 6.312–68.

152 Another epic character cast in an unusual role is Statius' Achilles (*Ach.* 1), who overplays his female disguise and is exposed to humiliation in a very public display of his cross-dressing. Achilles' new version is instrumental in the poet's rejection of the Ovidian idea that rape is a simple and effective statement of masculinity, as Achilles' masculinity is clearly not established through his rape of Deidamia (Heslin 2005, 268–9).

153 Apollonius prevents his readers from reaching a certain characterisation of Jason, whose words, actions and purposes are regularly presented ambiguously (Byre 2002, 11, 15, 163); equally, the characterisation of Medea would explain and act as a prequel to the Euripidean character (Byre 2002, 67–148).

154 [Theocr.] 5.1–4= *HE* 3492–5 G-P. In Theocr. *Id.* 6.43–5 Daphnis' playing his σῦριγξ forces the calves to spring on the meadow.

155 Harries 1994, 66–67.

being quickly moved into the next scene, that of the judgement, which will in turn create a new deception of verbal war among the goddesses.

This impression is reinforced when we compare Paris' to Jason's ambivalent character, the final decision also being left to the readers.[156] Jason has been interpreted in many ways by scholars in the attempt to pin down the nature of his heroism:[157] according to Hunter, he is a quiet and eloquent diplomat who works through consensus from his peers rather than force;[158] he is a hero with sex appeal; he is an anti-hero; he embodies the Sceptic's "suspension of judgement" through his *amechanie*; he is lifelike and credible.[159] For Hunter, scholars forgot that epic is not necessarily centred on a single hero, and Jason's "disappointing" heroism is the result of an incorrect analysis which invokes what the poet has chosen not to say in order to explain narrative. On the premises of Aristotle's *Poetics* (where character is defined through a close connection between epic and tragedy), an alternative reading is suggested: this shifts the focus onto the actions and the words that are said, as manifestations of Jason's moral choices. His behaviour, which previously seemed that of a disappointing hero, now acquires new meanings when is read in the light of the Homeric model. For instance, Jason does not always know what to do or say (he is ἀμήχανος); however, Homeric heroes are also affected by doubt and despair,[160] and his *amechanie*, previously interpreted negatively as the extreme opposite of Odysseus' *polymechanie*, seems essential to his character, just like Odysseus' *polymechanie*.[161] Jason's openness to compromise and his controlled and rational reaction to accusations and provocations, previously seen by scholars in an unfavourable light as passivity, now show the qualities of a successful leader.[162] Moreover, Jason has the skills of both Homeric heroes, Achilles' *arete* and Odysseus' *dolos*: he has proven his ability to succeed in conventional epic combat (in the battle against the Doliones in *Arg*. 1), but when, like Odysseus, he faces challenging situations in which an attempt to fight with prowess alone

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156 Knight 1995, 112–13.

157 A summary of interpretations—sometimes negative—is in Mori 2008, 83.

158 On the contrast between Jason's preference for words and Heracles' inclination to actions see Mori 2008, 60–69.

159 Hunter 1988, 437–8, and 442.

160 Hunter 1988, 438–42, and 447 discusses how Jason is not as bound to the security of the community and not as hungry for personal κλέος as Homeric heroes, and how his relationship with his crew is based, unlike Odysseus', on solidarity and mutual interdependence in a democratic structure.

161 Mori 2008, 74.

162 Jason's response to Telamon, which leads to their reconciliation, is aligned with Aristotle's theories on how to manage anger (*Rhet*. 1378a21–22, 30–33); see Mori 2008, 84–9.

could prove lethal, he succeeds by resorting to his guile.[163] Jason sometimes needs encouragement,[164] unlike Homeric heroes, but in a way that is similar to Euripides' Orestes in the *Electra*: they both need support "to accomplish difficult but necessary tasks imposed upon them by oracular command";[165] his sexual identity may also seem jeopardised when his delight is compared to that of a πάρθενος in *Arg*. 4.167–73, but this can also be explained as a stage of his transition to manhood,[166] as shown by his approach to the imminent departure in *Arg*. 1.295–305.[167] A comprehensive verdict on Apollonius' character is provided by Mori: Jason's heroism lies in his leadership and diplomatic skills,[168] in his self-control, in his rational and understanding approach, and, mostly, in his credit for settling all the disputes on the Argo. This keeps the Argonauts united with regard to their common goal, and safeguards or restores *homonoia* whenever a potential quarrel threats to jeopardise that unity, as in the case of Heracles' speech during the election scene at Pagasae in *Arg*. 3, and the argument with Telamon at the end of *Arg*. 1.[169]

In *Arg*. 3, Apollonius employs Homeric devices and phraseology from battle scenes in unusual settings and with new purposes, and he relies on his readers to evaluate Jason's *aristeia* in comparison with that of Homeric heroes. This leads to open interpretations of Jason's resemblance to Achilles, in his favour or not. The final decision is left to the reader.[170] Jason resembles Achilles and other Homeric heroes (the vocabulary and content used by Apollonius echo Homer),[171] but a clear-cut association of Jason with Achilles is prevented

163 Knight 1995, 113.

164 Hunter 1988, 441, 445.

165 Hunter 1988, 452.

166 Hunter 1988, 451–3.

167 Mori 2008, 60–61 contrasts Heracles' impulsive departure from his solitary labours, dictated by his desire to take part in an enterprise which will grant him fame among many, with Jason's sad but thoughtful goodbye, which shares its rejection of maternal authority and its announcement of a rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood with Telemachus' rebuke to Penelope in *Od*. 17.46–7.

168 See also Clauss 1997, 155.

169 Mori 2008, 71 and 82–90.

170 Knight 1995, 112–13; Clare 2002, 47; Mori 2008, 64.

171 An excellent example is the arming scene of Aeetes, which is setup in Homeric terms, creating an expectation in readers that he will fight, but he actually arms to no purpose. On the other hand, Jason's arming scene, although parallel to that of Aeetes, focusses on his reliance on the drugs provided to him by Medea (an un-Homeric method to prepare for battle); see Knight 1995, 102–107.

because the poet avoids characterising Jason directly as an Achillean figure,[172] just as Colluthus hints at many interpretations for his Paris.

From this perspective, Paris can also represent a doublet for Colluthus, as Jason's portrayal overlaps with Apollonius.[173] Colluthus, too, can be the poet who is able to compose in a Homeric style, as well as in bucolic, invective, and ekphrastic style. Like for Paris' characterisation, Colluthus' style and models cannot be pinned down to a particular type, but the multifaceted nature of his writing allows for a number of readings. A further element contributes to such an interpretation: Nonnus establishes his poetic ideal of ποικιλία evoking the apparition of Proteus,[174] the ever-changing god, in *Dion.* 1.13–15: he, a symbol of the variety of his song, is also possibly alluded to by Colluthus in 109, as seen above.

A further interesting example which highlights how irony and intertextuality function together is offered by the scene in which Paris, who has been told to examine the goddesses' faces (130),[175] scrutinises their necks and feet instead (134–6), and ultimately ends up choosing breasts.[176]

δεῦρο διακρίνων προφερέστερον εἶδος ὀπωπῆς
φαιδροτέρῃ τόδε μῆλον, ἐπήρατον ἔρνος, ὀπάσσαις.
τοῖον ἀνηΰτησεν· ὁ δ' ἤπιον ὄμμα τανύσσας
ἦκα διακρίνειν πειρήσατο κάλλος ἑκάστης.
δέρκετο μὲν γλαυκῶν βλεφάρων σέλας, ἔδρακε δειρὴν
χρυσῷ δαιδαλέην, ἐφράσσατο κόσμον ἑκάστης
καὶ πτέρνης μετόπισθε καὶ αὐτῶν ἴχνια ταρσῶν.

Come and choose the most perfect beauty of face, and award the most striking with this apple, a much desired fruit. This he cried. So Paris

172 See the elaboration of Homeric similes in Apollonius analysed in Knight 1995, 107–110. Jason is compared to the same things the Greeks are, thus he is associated to his side, but the images employed by Homer for Achilles are never applied to Jason in the *Argonautica* without updates or variations. See also Clare 2002, 46 and Mori 2008, 64 for Heracles' ambivalent speech in the election at Pagasae as a very different Achilles.

173 Jason's reticence on Ariadne's abandonment reveals Apollonius' authorial intervention and his poetic choice not to provide further details on the matter (Clare 2002, 280).

174 Proteus is challenged and defeated by the poet in a virtuosity contest.

175 As noted in the analysis of Aphrodite's invective, faces represent the body part that deserves most attention in the epyllion, and, as stated by both Zeus (75) and the goddess (86), the key beauty criteria.

176 In Nonnus' *Dion.* 48.935–42, Aura's voyeurism is punished with a cruel metamorphosis into a river (Schmiel 1993, 476–8).

> opened his kind eyes wide, and tried to assess slowly the beauty of each. He raked the brightness of the light blue eyes, and peered at their necks adorned with gold; he marked the arrangement of each, and the shape of their heels from behind, and the flat of their feet.

Colluthus pays homage to another preciously adorned neck, that of Harmonia, to whom Aphrodite gives an elaborate golden necklace in Nonn. *Dion.* 5.135–89. According to Nonnus, this jewel was made by Hephaestus, who gave it to Aphrodite as a gift for the birth of Eros; its famous ekphrasis describes its serpentine shape and a shiny buckle in the shape of an eagle, as well as the many precious stones set in it.[177] In particular, Colluthus' passage echoes 5.135–7 πολυφράδμων δ' Ἀφροδίτη / χρύσεον ὅρμον ἔχοντα λίθων πολυδαίδαλον αἴγλην / λευκὸν ἐρευθιόωντι συνήρμοσεν αὐχένι κούρης, "Aphrodite, then, always thinking ahead, clasped on the rosey neck of the girl a golden necklace, shining of its own brightness from its multifaceted stones", and 188–89 τοῖον ἐπεὶ Κυθέρεια γέρας δωρήσατο κούρῃ / χρύσεον, εὐλάιγγα, παρήορον αὐχένι νύμφης, "such is the gift that Aphrodite gave to her daughter: golden, decorated with precious gems, looks beautiful on the bride's neck".

The image of Paris surveying the goddesses may be reminiscent of another beauty contest in which Aphrodite must compete to reassure herself of her superiority with her victory: in Claudian, she scrutinises her own beauty in front of a mirror:

> Caesariem tunc forte Venus subnixa corusco
> Fingebat solio ...
> ... speculi nec vultus egebat
> Iudicio; similis tecto monstrantur in omni
> Et rapitur quocumque videt, dum singular cernit
> Seque probat.

> Venus was seated on her glittering throne, styling her hair ... Nor did her face lack the mirror's verdict; her image is reflected all over the palace and she is charmed wheresoever she looks. While she surveys each detail and approves her beauty.[178]

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177 Gigli Piaccardi 2003, 397–405.

178 Claud. *Nupt. Hon. et M.* 101–111 (transl. M. Platnauer, adapted). See also Cameron 1970, 93–102.

Here, it is Aphrodite herself who surveys her own beauty, while in Colluthus she is the one being surveyed. The parallel is particularly interesting due to its context: this portrait of the seductive pagan goddess belongs in the epithalamion dedicated by Claudian to Christian emperor Honorius and his wife Maria (daughter of Stilicho) in 398. It is also a great example of how it was still legitimate and appropriate to use a pagan goddess to bless the marriage of two Christian believers towards the end of the fourth century AD. Moreover, it has been noted how the poem represents the literary symbiosis of Christianity and pagan imagery; this is evident in contemporary art, for example in the ivory caskets depicting the goddess, which were commissioned as wedding gifts, and where the union of the couple was blessed through the main attributes of Aphrodite (desire and marriage) for the purpose of a shared life in Christ. As in toilet sets in which Aphrodite was depicted, which suggest the owner's wish to look as good as the goddess, here in Claudian, too, the beauty of Maria is compared to that of Aphrodite.[179]

The passage joins together allusions to three different encounters with the gods from Homer and the Hymns.[180] Firstly, Paris' scrutiny of the light of the goddesses' grey-green eyes, their necks adorned with golden jewellery, their order (*kosmos*) and the shape of their heels from behind (δέρκετο μὲν γλαυκῶν βλεφάρων σέλας) would prompt an educated reader to recall Athena's famous (and ambiguous) epithet 'bright eyes flashing' at *Il.* 1.206, and her epiphany (200). Colluthus rekindles the Homeric ambiguity around the identity of the eyes by adopting the plural, which may also echo the epiphany of Aphrodite to Helen in *Il.* 3.396–7 καί ῥ᾽ ὡς οὖν ἐνόησε θεᾶς περικαλλέα δειρὴν / στήθεά δ᾽ ἱμερόεντα καὶ ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα, "and of course, when she recognised the beautiful neck of the goddess, and her lovely chest and her radiant eyes …"). Moreover, σέλας (134) acts as a hint to guess the next allusion: in χρυσῷ δαιδαλέην, ἐφράσσατο κόσμον ἑκάστης, / καὶ πτέρνης μετόπισθε καὶ αὐτῶν ἴχνια ταρσῶν (135–6), we should see a clear reference to the encounter of Anchises and Aphrodite in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* (85–92), where the goddess wears on her neck beautiful gold necklaces that sparkle like the moon (ὡς δὲ σελήνη 90). The beginning and the conclusion of the two episodes also share similarities, leading Colluthus' readers to deduce how the context will end: when he first sees Aphrodite, Anchises assesses the goddess, like Paris does in Colluthus (*h.Aphr*. φράζω 84—Coll. ἐφράσσατο 135), and at the end Eros wins him over:

179 Papagiannaki 2010, 333–8. On the Byzantine art of comparing see Maguire 1988, 88–99.

180 I am very grateful to Dr Ashley Clements, to whom I owe this argument, for sharing these ideas with me.

Ἀγχίσης δ᾽ ὁρόων ἐφράζετο θαύμαινέν τε
εἶδός τε μέγεθός τε καὶ εἵματα σιγαλόεντα.
πέπλόν μὲν γὰρ ἕεστο φαεινότερον πυρὸς αὐγῆς,
εἶχε δ᾽ ἐπιγναμπτὰς ἕλικας κάλυκάς τε φαεινάς:
ὅρμοι δ᾽ ἀμφ᾽ ἁπαλῇ δειρῇ περικαλλέες ἦσαν.
καλόν, χρύσειον, παμποίκιλον: ὡς δὲ σελήνη
στήθεσιν ἀμφ᾽ ἁπαλοῖσιν ἐλάμπετο, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι:
Ἀγχίσην δ᾽ ἔρος εἷλεν, ἔπος δέ μιν ἀντίον ηὔδα:

Anchises gazed and took stock of her, wondering
At her appearance, her stature, and her shining garments;
For she wore a dress brighter than firelight,
And she had twisted bracelets and shining earbuds.
Round her tender neck there were beautiful necklaces
Of gold, most elaborate: it shone as the moon
Around her tender breasts, a wonder to see:
Anchises was seized by desire, and he addressed her face to face.

It comes as no surprise that Aphrodite was the one who was destined to have the most radiant face in the *Abduction*.[181]

The last element that is scrutinised by Paris is represented by the heels of the goddesses' feet (135–6). At this point Colluthus brings in an allusion to another Homeric epiphany that once again involves, and thus sheds ambiguity around, the identity of the goddess. In *Il.* 13.66–72, one of the two Ajaxes realises that he was speaking to a god, not to the prophet Calchas, exposed by his strange walk: ἴχνια γὰρ μετόπισθε ποδῶν ἠδὲ κνημάων ῥεῖ᾽ ἔγνων ἀπιόντος 71–2–Coll. μετόπισθε . . . ἴχνια ταρσῶν 136:

τοῖιν δ᾽ ἔγνω πρόσθεν Ὀϊλῆος ταχὺς Αἴας,
αἶψα δ᾽ ἄρ᾽ Αἴαντα προσέφη Τελαμώνιον υἱόν:
'Αἶαν ἐπεί τις νῶϊ θεῶν οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσι
μάντεϊ εἰδόμενος κέλεται παρὰ νηυσὶ μάχεσθαι,
οὐδ᾽ ὅ γε Κάλχας ἐστὶ θεοπρόπος οἰωνιστής:
ἴχνια γὰρ μετόπισθε ποδῶν ἠδὲ κνημάων
ῥεῖ᾽ ἔγνων ἀπιόντος: ἀρίγνωτοι δὲ θεοί περ

181 Note the emphasis on beauty of face also in *h.Aphr*. 174–5 κάλλος δὲ παρειάων ἀπέλαμπεν ἄμβροτον, like in Coll. 87 σήμερον ἀγλαΐαι με διακρίνουσι προσώπων, 130, 263.

> And of the two swift Aias, son of Oïleus, was first to mark the god, and forthwith spoke to Aias, son of Telamon: "Aias, seeing it is one of the gods who hold Olympus that in the likeness of the seer biddeth the two of us fight beside the ships—he is not Calchas, the prophet, and reader of omens, for easily did I know the tokens behind him of feet and of legs as he went from us; and plain to be known are the gods.

The two Ajaxes are aware that they have been speaking to a god in disguise, but they are unable to learn his/her exact identity. By reminding us that, while it is easy enough to detect the presence of a god through the interpretation of known signs, grasping their precise identity is not simple, Colluthus is exploiting this passage to re-propose the question around divine identity in the context of Paris' judgement, and therefore to push his readers to wonder which goddess they are to see, and which goddess is Paris actually beholding.

Colluthus interweaves references to three epic epiphanies and exploits the conventional signs that expose immortals to mortals to create the elaborate scene where Paris visually evaluates the goddesses. The aim is presumably to lead readers, by means of hints to be decoded within his text, towards this identification and towards the correct anticipation of what is going to happen next. If all the allusions are decoded correctly, readers are meant to see the goddesses in this sequence (kosmos): the sparkling eyes of Athena first (the γλαυκῶπις—γλαυκῶν βλεφάρων 134), and perhaps also of Aphrodite (ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα *Il.* 3.396–7), and then Aphrodite, evoked through the allusion to her necklaces which glisten like the moon in *h.Aphr.* 90. Like Paris assesses the order (135), so should we, in conjunction with the result and the logic behind the contest, which exploits the allusion to a passage that highlights the power of Aphrodite while she is fully dressed to add emphasis to her bare breasts. It is now clear how the contest is going to end.

The end result achieved by Colluthus plays with tradition through a complex intertextual weaving, and creates for the readers associations with what happens next. The fact that Paris, through a multiplicity of textual references, eventually chooses something that he had not been told to even consider (breasts) leads to an ironic outcome that is at the same time extremely rich in imagery.

Every feature admits legitimate questions to the educated public that Colluthus was targeting; the key to unlocking the text's originality is to read these apparent discrepancies as intentional effects carefully planned by the narrator. Colluthus is not inadequate in failing to fulfil the expectations towards which he leads his readers: he is succeeding in deliberately leading readers to

anticipate certain outcomes in order to then surprise them with something else. The choice of such a well-known story may have been instrumental to this objective, as it guaranteed high expectations in the readers in terms of content, characterisation and ethical interpretation.

## 2 An Epic Eris

Eris' episode is introduced by the act of disrespect perpetrated by Cheiron and Peleus, who fail to honour her (39–40). Strife is then compared, in a pastoral similitude, to a heifer who wanders away from the woody pasture into the lonely bush, hit by the gadfly (41–5); her plans to disrupt the banquet are described (46–56), followed by her decision to give them up and opt instead for the golden apples of the Hesperides, which she throws into the middle of the banquet (lines 57–63).

Colluthus makes an original choice here to allocate a fully characterised role to Eris, who is an active persona in the story and whose actions are not simply reported as the root-cause: in fact, Eris does not act as a character in any other version of the myth. The personification of Eris in the *Abduction*, together with those of sleep and death (366–8), and night (318–23), fits in with a broad tendency in late-antique epic to supply abstract concepts with bodies, as it often happens in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*.[182]

In Apuleius (*Met.* 10), the scene begins with Paris on Mount Ida; Lucian (*Dear. Iud.*) begins from Zeus' handing of the apple over to Paris, to give to the fairest; Strife is not present in *Cypria*, Ovid (*Her.* 16 and 17), nor in Catullus (*C.* 64). Eris' role as the originator of the war at Troy, however, is acknowledged by the most popular tradition, followed by [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 3.1–2, Luc. *Symp.* 35, Libanius *Pr.* 8.50.12, and Hygin 92: according to this version, Eris came to the wedding uninvited by Peleus.[183] In an older tradition, instead (*Cypria* 1, *schol. Il.* 4, and, if Fraenkel is right with his version, Aesch. *Ag.* 681–698), Eris' role is instrumental to Zeus' plan to reduce the population of the earth.

One character that Colluthus may have had in mind here is Nonnus' Nemesis in *Dion.* 48.375–89, where Artemis visits the goddess seeking punishment for Aura, who has insulted her masculine chest (351–79). Here, Nemesis

182 See Miguélez-Cavero 2013b.

183 Other occurrences of uninvited goddesses: *Il.* 9.533–6 (Artemis), Soph. *Aj.* 176, Eur. *Hipp.* 147, Apollod. 1.9.8, *schol.* Eur. *Or.* 249.

is presented with four allegorical emblems (the wheel, the griffin, the reins and the whip):[184] the wheel, in particular, may be a link to Eris' round fruit (given its round shape), and its consequences, described in detail in Nonnus, sound very similar to those of Eris' fruit:

> καὶ τροχὸς αὐτοκύλιστος ἔην παρὰ ποσσὶν ἀνάσσης
> σημαίνων, ὅτι πάντας ἀγήνορας εἰς πέδον ἕλκει
> ὑψόθεν εἰλυφόωσα δίκης ποινήτορι κύκλῳ,
> δαίμων πανδαμάτειρα, βίου στρωφῶσα πορείην·
>
> At the feet of the queen there is a wheel which rolls on itself, as to signify that the goddess who tames all drags to the ground all the superb, making them whirl from high in a circle, avenger of justice, turning the path of life.

Our poet draws on many of these sources in order to mould his character. While in the previous section (proem and Paris' description) Colluthus draws mostly on the bucolic genre, for Eris' scene he follows almost exclusively epic models.[185]

### 2.1 *The Gadfly*

The first image of Eris that Colluthus gives to his readers is that of a heifer stung by a gadfly (41–43). Like the animal, the goddess drives herself away from the crowd, a victim of envy. The word used by the poet to describe the pangs of jealousy, βαρυζήλοισιν (44), is an interesting choice as it evokes simultaneously ἔρος and ἔρις: it is used by Macedonius Consul, a contemporary of Colluthus, in *AP* 5.243.5, applied to Eros, jealous of the poet's lover; by Triphiodorus at 49, applied to Helenus, envious of his brother Deiphobus who had triumphed over him over the hand of Helen; and by Lycophron in 57, applied to Oenone (Paris' wife): Colluthus is here pointing directly at Helen, object of ἔρος and cause of ἔρις.

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184 Note the absence of other signature symbols of Nemesis such as the wings or her tunic (Accorinti 2004, 668).

185 This pattern is evident from the beginning of this part: in lines 39–40 Colluthus conflates Ap. Rh. 1.14, Ἥρης δὲ Πελασγίδος οὐκ ἀλέγιζεν, "although [Pelias] paid no honour to Pelasgian Hera", and 3.65 where Hera in turn recalls that Pelias had left her unhonoured with sacrifice: ὅς μ' ὑπερηνορέῃ θυέων ἀγέραστον ἔθηκεν. Here also, the similarity with Claudian appears immediately striking: in *Rapt.* 1.137 Ceres disdains Juno and Latona.

The simile of the gadfly is popular in epic poetry.[186] Livrea agreed with Pfeiffer (although he had failed to report Colluthus' passage) in identifying Aesch. *Suppl.* 307–8 βοηλάτην μύωπα κινητήριον. / οἶστρον καλοῦσιν αὐτὸν οἱ Νείλου πέλας, "King a sting, torment of cattle, constantly driving her on. [Chorus]: They call it a gadfly, those who dwell by the Nile" as the source of Call. fr. 301 βουσόον ὅν τε μύωπα βοῶν καλέουσιν ἀμορβοί,[187] "The ox-driving gadfly, which the herdsmen call the goad" and of the motif overall.[188] However, the origin of the topos has later been correctly identified by James in Homer *Od.* 22.299–301:[189]

> οἱ δ' ἐφέβοντο κατὰ μέγαρον βόες ὣς ἀγελαῖαι·
> τὰς μέν τ' αἰόλος οἶστρος ἐφορμηθεὶς ἐδόνησεν
> ὥρῃ ἐν εἰαρινῇ, ὅτε τ' ἤματα μακρὰ πέλονται·
>
> They were running away here and there through the halls like a herd of kine that the darting gad-fly falls upon and excites during the spring, when days are long.

The successful simile is not missing from any epic poet (Oppian of Anazarbus also employs it in a scientific description in *Hal.* 2.521–32), so much so that it seems to be a staple of the genre, applied to both angry (ἔρις) and besotted

186 See Gigli 1978. The topos enjoyed popularity also with Roman literature, as in Virgil, who employs it in *Geor.* 3.146–56: *est lucos Silari circa ilicibusque uirentem / plurimus Alburnum uolitans, cui nomen asilo / Romanum est, oestrum Grai uertere uocantes, / asper, acerba sonans, quo tota exterrita siluis / diffugiunt armenta; furit mugitibus aether / concussus siluaeque et sicci ripa Tanagri. / hoc quondam monstro horribilis exercuit iras / Inachiae Iuno pestem meditata iuuencae. / hunc quoque* (*nam mediis feruoribus acrior instat*) / *arcebis grauido pecori, armentaque pasces / sole recens orto aut noctem ducentibus astris*, "There's a gadfly, its Roman name is asilus, but the Greeks call it, in their tongue, oestrus, that buzzes round the groves of Silacus, and the green oaks of lburnus, in great numbers, fierce, and high-pitched in sound, and whole herds scatter from it, through the woods, the breeze, the trees, and banks of dry Tanagra, stunned, in terror, mad with bellowing. Juno once worked her terrible anger with this creature, when she plagued Io, the daughter of Inachus, changed to a heifer. Keep it away from the pregnant herd, too (since it attacks more fiercely in the midday heat) by grazing the cattle when the sun's newly risen, or the stars are bringing on the night". (trans. A.S. Kline). Just before Colluthus' time, Empress Eudocia (c. 401–460) remembers the topos in *Mart. Cypr.* 1–15.

187 Nonnus recalls this line in *Dion.* 11.191 μύωπα βοοσσόον. On the appraisal of Aeschylus in late antiquity, and in Musaeus in particular, see Candio 2012.

188 Livrea 1968a, 84. Aeschylus employs an ongoing gadfly metaphor for Io also in *Prom.* 567, 578–81, 589–90, 673–7, 680–2, 836–7, 879–80.

189 James 1969.

subjects (ἔρος). Apollonius 1.1265–71 models his version[190] on Homer, making sure not to re-employ any of the same words, when he describes Heracles' anger at the news of his beloved Hylas' death:

> ὡς δ' ὅτε τίς τε μύωπι τετυμμένος ἔσσυτο ταῦρος
> πίσεά τε προλιπὼν καὶ ἑλεσπίδας, οὐδὲ νομήων
> οὐδ' ἀγέλης ὄθεται, πρήσσει δ' ὁδὸν ἄλλοτ' ἄπαυστος,
> ἄλλοτε δ' ἱστάμενος καὶ ἀνὰ πλατὺν αὐχέν' ἀείρων
> ἵησιν μύκημα, κακῷ βεβολημένος οἴστρῳ—
> ὧς ὅγε μαιμώων ὁτὲ μὲν θοὰ γούνατ' ἔπαλλεν
> συνεχέως, ὁτὲ δ' αὖτε μεταλλήγων καμάτοιο
> τῆλε διαπρύσιον μεγάλῃ βοάασκεν ἀυτῇ.
>
> And as when a bull stung by a gadfly tears along, leaving the meadows and the marshland, and recks not of herdsmen or herd, but presses on, now without cheek, now standing still, and raising his broad neck he bellows loudly, stung by the maddening fly; so he in his frenzy now would ply his swift knees unresting, now again would cease from toil and shout afar with loud pealing cry.

Quintus of Smyrna 11.207–11 follows Homer in associating the gadfly with fear:

> Ἀργεῖοι δὲ βόεσσιν ἐοικότες ἐπτοίηντο
> οὕς τ' ἄμοτον μεμαῶτας ὑπὸ ζεύγλῃ καὶ ἀρότρῳ
> τύψῃ ὑπὸ λαπάρην ταναοῖς ὑπὸ χείλεσιν οἶστρος
> αἵματος ἱέμενος, τοὶ δ' ἄσπετον ἀσχαλόωσιν
> ἔργου ἑκὰς φεύγοντες
>
> The Argives were then seized by panic, like bulls straining steadily under the yoke of a plow, when they are struck in the side by the thin sting of a gadfly thirsty for blood; in their unspeakable torment they abandon their duty.

Triphiodorus obviously had all three models in mind when describing Cassandra's ἔρις at 359–67:

190 Also 3.275–7: Τόφρα δ' Ἔρως πολιοῖο δι' ἠέρος ἷξεν ἄφαντος, / τετρηχὼς οἷόν τε νέαις ἐπὶ φορβάσιν οἶστρος / τέλλεται, ὅν τε μύωπα βοῶν κλείουσι νομῆες, "Meantime Eros arrived unseen through the grey mist, causing violence, as when the goad, which oxherds call the gadfly jumps on grazing heifers".

διαρρήξασα δ᾽ ὀχῆας
ἔδραμεν ἠύτε πόρτις ἀήσυρος, ἥντε τυπεῖσαν
κέντρον ἀνεπτοίησε βοορραίσταο μύωπος·
ἡ δ᾽ οὐκ εἰς ἀγέλην ποτιδέρκεται οὐδὲ βοτῆρι
πείθεται οὐδὲ νομοῖο λιλαίεται, ἀλλὰ βελέμνῳ
ὀξέι θηγομένη βοέων ἐξήλυθε θεσμῶν·
τοίη μαντιπόλοιο βολῆς ὑπὸ νύγματι κούρη
πλαζομένη κραδίην ἱερὴν ἀνεσείετο δάφνην.
πάντη δ᾽ ἐβρυχᾶτο κατὰ πτόλιν

[Cassandra] tore apart the bars and she ran, like a restless heifer whom the sting of a gadfly, that torments the ox, has smitten and stung to frenzy: which does not look to the herd anymore nor obeys the herdsman nor longs for the pasture, but whetted by the sharp dart she goes beyond the range of oxen: in such way, her heart distraught by the pricking of the shafts of prophecy, the maiden shook the holy laurel wreath and cried everywhere throughout the city.

Nonnus employs the simile in *Dion.* 42.185–9 to describe the passion of Dionysus for Beroe:[191]

ὡς δ᾽ ὅτε βοῦς ἀκίχητος ἔσω πλαταμῶνος ὁδεύων
ἐσμὸν ὀρεσσινόμων παρεμέτρεεν ἤθάδα ταύρων
οἰστρηθεὶς ἀγέληθεν, ὃν εὐπετάλῳ παρὰ λόχμῃ
βουτύπος ὀξυόεντι μύωψ ἐχαράσσετο κέντρῳ
ἀπροϊδής, ὀλίγῳ δὲ δέμας βεβολημένος οἴστρῳ
τηλίκος ἐστυφέλικτο,

As when an ox, rushing over the flats, goes past the well-known herd of mountain-grazing bulls, driven away from the flock when a gadfly, goad of bulls, has secretly pierced his hide with sharp sting under the leafy trees: how small the sting that strikes, how large the body of the beast shaken by it!

The table below summarises how the topos has been linguistically re-elaborated by Colluthus and his predecessors:

191 See also a similar scene in in 15.214–8, where a mare wanders away to graze, neglected by her cowherd, who is in love.

| Homer | Aesch. | Ap. Rh. | Call. | Oppian | Quintus | Triph. | Nonnus | Coll. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| οἶστρος | μύωπα κινητήριον. οἶστρον, οἰστρηλάτῳ δὲ δείματι | μύωπι, οἴστρῳ | μύωπα | οἶστρος, βουτύπος | οἶστρος | βοορραίσταο μύωπος, κέντρον | βουτύπος . . . μύωψ, μύωπα | φοινήεντι μύωπι, βοῶν ἐλατῆρι; οἶστρον (97); κέντρον (96) |
| βόες | βοηλάτην | ταῦρος | βοῶν, βουσόον | βουσίν | βόεσσιν | πόρτις | βοῦς, ταύρων, βοοσσόον | πόρτις; βοῶν |
| | | οὐδὲ νομήων/ οὐδ᾽ ἀγέλης ὄθεται | | οὔτε τι βουφόρβων μέλεται σέβας οὔτε νομοῖο,/ οὔτ᾽ ἀγέλης | ἔργου ἑκὰς φεύγοντες | ἡ δ᾽ οὐκ εἰς ἀγέλην ποτιδέρκεται οὐδὲ βοτῆρι/ πείθεται οὐδὲ νομοῖο λιλαίεται | | νομοῖο, ξυλόχοισιν |
| | | πίσεά τε προλιπὼν καὶ ἑλεσπίδας | | ποίην δὲ καὶ αὔλια πάντα λιπόντες | | βοέων ἐξήλυθε θεσμῶν | ἔσω πλαταμῶνος ὁδεύων/ἐσμὸν ὀρεσσινόμων παρεμέτρεεν ἠθάδα ταύρων | βησσήεντος ἀποπλαγχθεῖσα νομοῖο |
| | | ἔσσυτο | | σεύονται Βέλος + ὀξὺ κελεύων | | ἔδραμεν Κέντρον; βελέμνῳ/ ὀξέι | ὁδεύων ὀξυόεντι . . . κέντρῳ | ἀλᾶται |

(*cont.*)

| Homer | Aesch. | Ap. Rh. | Call. | Oppian | Quintus | Triph. | Nonnus | Coll. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | χρίει τις οἶστρος, | μύωπι | | λύσσῃ | οὔς τ᾽ ἄμοτον | τυπεῖσαν; | ὀλίγῳ . . . | φοινήεντι |
| | οἰστρηλάτῳ δὲ | τετυμμένος; | | τεθοωμένοι | μεμαῶτας ὑπὸ | βελέμνῳ ὀξέι | βεβολημένος | μύωπι . . . |
| | δείματι παράκοπον, | κακῷ | | | ζεύγλῃ καὶ | θηγομένη | οἴστρῳ | τυπεῖσα |
| | τῆς οἰστροδινήτου | βεβολημένος | | | ἀρότρῳ τύψῃ ὑπὸ | | | |
| | κόρης, ὀξυστόμῳ | οἴστρῳ | | | λαπάρην ταναοῖς | | | |
| | μύωπι χρισθεῖσ᾽, | | | | ὑπὸ χείλεσιν | | | |
| | οἰστροπλὴξ δ᾽ ἐγὼ | | | | οἶστρος αἵματος | | | |
| | μάστιγι θείᾳ, | | | | ἱέμενος | | | |
| | οἰστρήσασ, οἴστρου δ᾽ | | | | | | | |
| | ἄρδις χρίει μ᾽ ἄπυρος | | | | | | | |
| | | ἵησιν μύκημα | | πάντῃ δὲ βρυχή | | πάντῃ δ᾽ ἐβρυχᾶτο | | |

Oppian uses the very same words that Homer had used, as highlighted by James:[192] βουσίν 521 (Hom. βόες), οἶστρος 522 (Hom. οἶστρος), where Apollonius has ταῦρος and μύωπι (1.1265), and also imitates Apollonius playing with Homeric expressions, as he does with ποίην (524) used to replace πίσεα (Ap. 1.1266), exploiting Homer's formula πίσεα ποιήεντα. Nonnus recovers βοῦς, but also has ταύρων, reflecting Apollonius. He uses βουτύπος in place of Homer's and Oppian's οἶστρος, but βουτύπος had also been used by Oppian as a synonym in 529.

Colluthus' simile is presented concisely in the space of only three lines (41–43), and, in choosing μύωπι, πόρτις, νομοῖο and τυπεῖσα, pays tribute to Triphiodorus more than to any other model. He introduces elements of originality to the topos: while his predecessors had described the animals as no longer concerned with the herdsman, pasture and herd, Colluthus describes the heifer as simply wandering away from the pasture in the glen, roaming in lonely copses, an image that is closer to that of Nonnus and Triphiodorus than to their predecessors'. This comparison applies better to the character of Eris as a goddess who instinctively seeks to be alone in her envy, a feeling that drives individuals to isolation from the group. Moreover, Colluthus shows originality also in employing ἐλατῆρι (43) in a different meaning than "driver":[193] in this context the word means "pressing on". He employs words that have not previously been used in his models: ἀλᾶται at 42 (where Triphiodorus had ἔδραμεν, Nonnus ὁδεύων, while Apollonius and Oppian had used forms of σεύω), and φοινήεις at 43 (a Homeric hapax) instead of βοοραίστης to define the μύωψ. Colluthus recovers ἐρημαίῃσιν (42), an adjective not employed by Homer, probably imitating Nonnus,[194] Triphiodorus 141, and especially Moschus *Bio*. 21 and Ap. Rh. 2.385, 672[195] who used the adjective applied to natural places such as trees, planes, islands. He also uses ξυλόχοισιν (42), a word that is traditionally associated with wild and aggressive animals, like in *Il*. 11.415 (of a wild boar).[196] The closest model, however, seems *Il*. 5.162, where a lion comes out to attack cows that are at pasture in the thicket. With this choice, the poet is reminding his readers that, although Eris is being compared to a calf, her nature is still that of an angry beast. Another interesting word choice is πληγῇσι (44), which would make more sense if referred to Eros stinging his victims, but here

192 James 1969, 84–5.

193 As in *h.Merc*. 265 and *Il*. 4.145.

194 *Dion*. 3.203, 42.61.

195 See Livrea 1968a, 83.

196 Also see *Il*. 21.573 (of a panther), *Od*. 4.335 and 17.126, (of a lion), 19. 445 (of a wild swine), Palaeph. 14 (of a bear).

it refers to the victim herself. Colluthus also uses similarly structured expressions to mirror the heifer and Eris: πόρτις … φοινήεντι μύωπι … τυπεῖσα corresponds to βαρυζήλοισιν Ἔρις πληγῇσι δαμεῖσα, and ἀλᾶται to πλάζετο. The simile is continued by μαστεύουσα, which first (45) describes Eris as an animal walking around in anger, craving food (δαῖτας, "feast"), and later is applied to Hermione, the daughter whom Helen will leave behind and who will also be desperately searching for her mother (μητέρα μαστεύουσα 388): the choice of πόρτις, "young heifer, calf" may also be an allusion to her. Eris and Hermione are then associated in their search, one for revenge, the second for her mother. The model for this line has in the past been identified as Nonn. *Par*. 20.11 ἥψατο μαστεύουσα (of Mary Magdalene);[197] however, πλάζετο μαστεύουσα appears once in the *Dionysiaca*, where it describes a whale who seeks the cave of a sea lioness during the downpour caused by Zeus (6.299).[198] More significantly, μαστεύουσα appears in 15.218, inserted in a similar scene in which a mare is neglected by her cowherd (who is in love) and wanders alone in the swamp.

Colluthus also plays with the above-mentioned ambiguity between strife and eros through the use of two words which are normally used to define erotic sting, οἶστρος (97)[199] and κέντρον (96),[200] but are also employed in the gadfly similes. By doing so, he makes sure to embody that ambiguity in his character, whose actions are spurred from envy and ἔρις, but are also associated with ἔρος. Cause and effects of the war, then, are blurred: strife and eros, in the persons of uninvited Eris and lustful Paris and Helen, are both at the root and at the end of the Trojan War.

## 2.2 *Eris' Plan of Destruction*

The second part of Eris' description goes through her various plans to disrupt the banquet (46–56). The goddess appears here as frightful as she did in the *Iliad* on the shield of Achilles (18.535–8):

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197 Giangrande 1969, 150.

198 Μαστεούσα recurs often in the *Dionysiaca* in contexts of searches for remains of dead relatives, as in 5.389 and 540 (of Autonoe in search of the scattered remains of her son), and in 47.206 (of Erigone searching for her father Icarius). On many occasions the word describe women searching for Dionysus: 21.187 (a Bacchant), 33.227 (Chalcomedea), 8.944 (Artemis).

199 Mus. 129, 133; Nonn. *Dion*. 34.97.

200 Nonn. *Dion*. 4.217, 6.348, 15.85, 34.24, 41.323, 42.210, 48.509 and *AP* 10.120. However κέντρον can also imply pain as in *Dion*. 3.335, 6.51, 19.1, and even a bitter-sweet goad: *Dion*. 42.441 κέντρον γλυκύπικρον.

> ἐν δ᾽ Ἔρις ἐν δὲ Κυδοιμὸς ὁμίλεον, ἐν δ᾽ ὀλοὴ Κήρ,
> ἄλλον ζωὸν ἔχουσα νεούτατον, ἄλλον ἄουτον,
> ἄλλον τεθνηῶτα κατὰ μόθον ἕλκε ποδοῖιν·
> εἷμα δ᾽ ἔχ᾽ ἀμφ᾽ ὤμοισι δαφοινεὸν αἵματι φωτῶν
>
> And Eris and Tumult were among them, and deadly Fate, grasping one man alive, recently wounded, another unhurt, and another she dragged dead through the fight by the feet; and the clothing that she wore on her shoulders was red with the blood of men.

However, the most relevant parallel seems to be 4.440–5:

> Δεῖμός τ᾽ ἠδὲ Φόβος καὶ Ἔρις ἄμοτον μεμαυῖα,
> Ἄρεος ἀνδροφόνοιο κασιγνήτη ἑτάρη τε,
> ἥ τ᾽ ὀλίγη μὲν πρῶτα κορύσσεται, αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
> οὐρανῷ ἐστήριξε κάρη καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ βαίνει·
> ἥ σφιν καὶ τότε νεῖκος ὁμοίϊον ἔμβαλε μέσσῳ
> ἐρχομένη καθ᾽ ὅμιλον ὀφέλλουσα στόνον ἀνδρῶν.
>
> And Terror, and Defeat, and relentless Eris stormed too, sister and partner-in-arms of slaughterer Ares, only a slight thing when she first rears her head but her head soon hits the sky as she strides across the earth. Now Eris hurled down the leveller Hate amidst both sides, walking among the crowd, multiplying men's weeping.

Colluthus recalls this passage with χθονίων and οὐρανὸν (50–1—Hom. 443), while he borrows the verb that describes Eris' thinking (μήσατο Coll. 55—Eur. 799) and πολυμόχθοις (μόχθων Coll. 61—Eur. 800) from Eur. *Phoen*. 798–800:

> ἦ δεινά τις Ἔρις θεός, ἃ τάδε
> μήσατο πήματα γᾶς βασιλεῦσιν
> Λαβδακίδαις πολυμόχθοις
>
> Eris is truly a goddess to fear, who devised these troubles for the princes of this land, for the much-suffering sons of Labdacus.

For this section, Colluthus follows closely *Il.* 9.568–81: during the embassy to Achilles, Phoenix makes a lengthy and emotional plea for him to stay, taking the example of Meleager—another warrior who, in a moment of rage, refused to fight—to illustrate the importance of responding to the pleas of helpless

comrades. Achilles stands firm, however, still feeling the sting of Agamemnon's insult. In this particular passage, Meleager's mother, Althaea, begs the gods of the underworld to punish her son:

| *Iliad* 9 | **Colluthus** |
| --- | --- |
| 568–71:<br>**πολλὰ** δὲ καὶ γαῖαν πολυφόρβην **χερσὶν** ἀλοία<br>κικλήσκουσ' Ἀΐδην καὶ ἐπαινὴν Περσεφόνειαν<br><br>**πρόχνυ καθεζομένη**, δεύοντο δὲ δάκρυσι **κόλποι**, παιδὶ δόμεν θάνατον·<br>She kept pounding fists on the earth that feeds us all, kept crying out to Hades and grim Persephone, she knelt, tears streaking her robes, screaming that they should kill her son. | 46–8:<br>**πολλάκι** δ' εὐλάιγγος ἀπὸ κλισμοῖο θοροῦσα<br>ἵστατο καὶ παλίνορσος **ἐφέζετο· χειρὶ** δὲ πέτρης<br>**οὔδεϊ κόλπον** ἄραξε καὶ οὐκ ἐφράσσατο **γαῖα** ·<br>And many times she jumped up from her seat, embroidered with precious stones, got ready, and then, as backtracking, she sat down again. With her hand, she stroke to the ground, and the bosom of the earth seemed not to notice. |
| 571–4:<br>τῆς δ' **ἠεροφοῖτις** Ἐρινὺς<br>ἔκλυεν ἐξ **Ἐρέβεσφιν ἀμείλιχον ἦτορ ἔχουσα.**<br>τῶν δὲ τάχ' ἀμφὶ πύλας **ὅμαδος καὶ δοῦπος** ὀρώρει<br>πύργων βαλλομένων· [...]<br><br>And out of dark Erebus a Fury who walks in darkness heard her cries, although she had an implacable heart, and suddenly the footfalls of men around the gates were heard, towers battered under assault [...] | 49–54:<br>ἤθελεν **ὀρφναίων γυάλων κληῖδας** ἀνεῖσα,<br>ἐκ **χθονίων** Τιτῆνας ἀναστήσασα **βερέθρων**<br>**οὐρανὸν** ὑψιμέδοντος ἀιστῶσαι Διὸς ἕδρην.<br>ἤθελεν **ἠχήεντα**[202] πυρὸς **πρηστῆρα** τινάσσειν,<br>Ἡφαίστῳ δ' ὑπόεικεν **ἀμαιμακέτη περ ἐοῦσα**, καὶ πυρὸς ἀσβέστοιο καὶ ὀπτευτῆρι σιδήρου. καὶ<br>She had all intentions to unfasten the bolts of the dark hollows, and raise the Titans from the nether abyss and to wipe out the sky, home to Zeus, who rules on high. She was willing to brandish a roaring hurricane of fire, but, however untamed, she gave in to Hephaestus, forger of unquenchable fire and iron. |

201 Ap. Rh. 1.1236.

| *Iliad* 9 | **Colluthus** |
|---|---|
| 581–3:<br>πολλὰ δέ μιν λιτάνευε γέρων ἱππηλάτα Οἰνεὺς<br>οὐδοῦ ἐπεμβεβαὼς ὑψηρεφέος θαλάμοιο<br>**σείων κολλητὰς σανίδας** γουνούμενος υἱόν·<br>and over and over the old horseman Oeneus begged him, he took a stand at the threshold of the vaulted chamber, shaking the bolted doors, begging his own son![203] | 55:<br>**σακέων** **βαρύδουπον** ἐμήσατο **κόμπον** ἀράσσειν<br>And she did think about pounding out the loud-roaring clash of shields. |

Livrea links Colluthus' scene directly to the above Homeric passage, for a number of lexical correspondences: χερσίν 568—Coll. 47 χειρί; καθεζομένη 570—Coll. 47 ἐφέζετο; κόλποι 570—Coll. 48 κόλπον.[203] The parallel goes further in Hom. γαῖαν 568—Coll. 48 γαῖα; πρόχνυ 570—Coll. 48 οὐδεϊ; ἠεροφοῖτις 571—Coll. 49 ὀρφναίων γυάλων; Ἐρέβεσφιν 572—Coll. 50 χθονίων βερέθρων; ἀμείλιχον ἦτορ ἔχουσα 572—Coll. 53 ἀμαιμακέτη περ ἐοῦσα; ὅμαδος καὶ δοῦπος 573—Coll. 55 κόμπον; σείων κολλητὰς σανίδας 583—Coll. 49 κληῖδας ἀνεῖσα. Livrea had suggested a similarity in terms of content based on the fact that Colluthus was also the author of a *Calydoniaca*, about the myth of Meleager. The similarity shared by Althaea and Eris is their anger, and the overall darkness and noise associated with this feeling. Moreover, both characters express their resentment by throwing an object: Eris the apple into the banquet, and Althaea the piece of wood that represented Meleager's life into the fire.

Eris' jumping up and down out of her seat also reminds us of Medea when she first falls in love with Jason in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.645–55: she hesitates for a long time before walking into Calciope's room to speak to her; she goes out of her room, then hesitates and returns to her own room three times, torn between shame and desire. Here, again, a behaviour dictated by Eros is shared by Eris.

Other scenes of similar violence from Nonnus are evoked by Colluthus' passage, in particular *Dion.* 36.96–107, where Hades is worried that Poseidon may subvert the cosmic order with his onslaughts and expose the earth's

202 Trans. R. Fagles, adapted.

203 Livrea 1968a, 85–7.

foundations (especially 101 μή ποτε κινήσας χθονίων κρηπῖδα βερέθρων).[204] Line 62 is the industrious mix of two half hemistychia by Nonnus:[205] *Dion.* 36.41 χειρὶ δὲ δινεύουσα πεπηγότα νῶτα χαλάζης,[206] where Hera strikes Artemis with a sharp dart, and 1.398 καὶ σύ, τελεσσιγόνοιο γάμου πρωτόσπορος ἀρχή, a *clausola* often referred by Nonnus to Eros,[207] where Eris is causing strife, πόλεμος, μόθος, while Eros in contrast is the originator of fecund marriage.

Colluthus may also recall Hecuba's gesture in Eur. *Troad.* 1305–9: γεραιά γ' ἐς πέδον τιθεῖσα μέλε' ἐμὰ καὶ χερσὶ γαῖαν κτυποῦσα δισσαῖς. [Χο] διάδοχά σοι γόνυ τίθημι γαίαι τοὺς ἐμοὺς καλοῦσα νέρθεν ἀθλίους ἀκοίτας. "Yes, as I stretch my aged limbs upon the ground, and beat upon the earth with both my hands. [Chorus]: I follow you and kneel, invoking from the nether world my hapless husband".[208]

When Eris eventually gives in to Hephaestus (53), Colluthus' model is Triph. 684–5 Ξάνθος ἰδὼν ἔκλαυσε γόων ἁλιμυρέι πηγῇ, Ἡφαίστῳ δ' ὑπόεικεν ἀτυζόμενος χόλον Ἥρης, "and Xanthus, beholding the fiery doom of the city, wept with seaward flowing fountain of lamentation, and, terrified by the anger of Hera, yielded to Hephaestus". The word ἀμαιμακέτη (53) evokes terrible monsters out of control which are thus inevitably associated with Eris: Nonnus employs it often,[209] as in *Dion.* 1.296 ἔντεα δὲ Κρονίωνος ἀμαιμακέτῃσιν ἀείρων, about Typhoeus, a monster born from Gaia and Tartarus; in *Il.* 6.179 and 16.329, the word is applied to the Chimaera, who, interestingly, was the daughter of Typhoeus, as was also alluded to at 102; and Hes. *Th.* 319 also uses it when speaking of the raging fire that the Chimaera vomited.

Before desisting, Eris thinks that the loud noise of clashing shields may frighten the gods and prompt them to arise (55–6). Livrea notes that ἰωήν, the version accepted in most editions,[210] is a correction of the manuscript version, which reads ἰωκήν, "pursuit", "riot", and that there is no need to amend this version, as the word has been chosen by the poet in anticipation of the toils that are

204 Also *Dion.* 26.128 κρύψατε σὺν γενετῆρι καταχθονίῳ με βερέθρῳ, where Eeria begs to be locked up with her father in the deep pit; 4.55 τοσσατίους Τιτῆνας ἐνεκλήισσε βερέθρῳ; 2.338 ἀπὸ χθονίοιο βερέθρου; and *Par.* 2.104–6, 6.157–9, and 2.1–4.

205 Orsini 1969, 16–17.

206 Colluthus employs two words that in Nonnus are applied to Typhoeus: ἀμαιμακέτη from 1.296, and δινήσασα from 2.456.

207 As in 41.129.

208 Also *h.Ap.* 155, where Hera invokes the help of the goddesses of the Underworld; Diog. Laert. *AP* 7.118.

209 Livrea 1968a, 89.

210 Mair, Orsini, Schönberger, Cuartero i Iborra.

the consequences of Eris' gesture, i.e. the Trojan War. Moreover, ἰωκήν is also identified in *Il.* 5.740 with Eris herself: ἐν δ' Ἔρις, ἐν δ' Ἀλκή, ἐν δὲ κρυόεσσα Ἰωκή, "Strife, Violence, Riot that makes the blood run cold".[211]

Eris finally settles on the plan to throw the golden fruit amidst the banquet of the gods (59–61). The gesture of throwing or giving an apple (μηλοβολεῖν) is traditionally associated with a love declaration[212] in the pagan tradition, the apple being a symbol of fertility or a love gift. The same gesture acquires a slightly different meaning in the myth of Acontius and Cydippe, where it is a binding token of marriage,[213] while in the myth of Atalanta golden apples are given to Hippomenes by Aphrodite as a trick to distract the girl during their footrace and thus allow him to win and marry her. Livrea notes how the story that told that the apple was to be offered to the fairest among the three goddesses,[214] previously dated to the Hellenistic period, was back-dated to around 650–625 BC due to the discovery, in the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia in Sparta, of an ivory comb showing Paris in the act of giving the apple to Aphrodite.[215] The chronological detail does not help in understanding whether Colluthus uses the tradition with any originality; however, in this case it is Eris who is throwing the apple, an act that will cause not love but strife and war. The negative connotation of her throwing the fruit may have some connection with the Christian tradition pertaining to the apple as a symbol of transgression and sin,[216] considering that the apple is defined by Colluthus as πολέμοιο προάγγελον ἔρνος (60) and μόθου πρωτόσπορον ἀρχήν (62), which refer not only to the quarrel started by the apple among the goddesses, but also to the ultimate consequence of the contest, the Trojan War, its destruction and the death of many people. Colluthus' search for the origin of the war is aligned with the late-antique interest in aetiology; however, since this was a topic that Hellenistic poetry shared with early Christian literature, Colluthus may have chosen this particular episode to play with both traditions.

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211 Livrea 1968, 92.

212 E.g. Ar. *Nub*. 997; *AP* 5.79, 80; Cat. 65.19.

213 Cydippe read aloud the inscription that Acontius had engraved on the apple, "I swear by Artemis that I will marry Acontius", and by doing so, bound herself to him. Each time she was to marry, then, she fell ill, until the oracle at Delphi revealed the cause of the obstacle. Her father finally agreed to marry her to Acontius. The story is told by Aristaen, *Ep*. 1.10 and Ovid *Her*. 20 and 21.

214 Luc. *Dial. Deor*. 20.7; *schol. Lyc*. 93; Apollod. *Epit*. 3.2; Eur. *Andr*. 276.

215 Livrea 1969, 93.

216 Sept. *Genesis* 3.1.

## 3 Aphrodite's *Agon*

Aphrodite is the character to whom most space is given in the epyllion: her three speeches expose different sides to her character, and give Colluthus the opportunity to play with rhetorical subgenres such as invective and the *agon*, aligning his work to the performative dimension of late-antique poetry.[217] The poet has exploited current and popular topoi (such as the goddess' toilette) and genres to give his own take on a well-known character and tick the right boxes with his contemporaries. The main models for this part are Claudian's *Gigantomachy* and Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* 9. The result is a feisty Aphrodite against whom Hera and Athena do not stand a chance.

### 3.1 *Aphrodite's Toilette*

Colluthus pays attention to hairstyles: Paris takes care that his hairdo is perfect before meeting Helen (231–5), and at the wedding of Thetis and Peleus Apollo sports curls that evoke Bacchic grapes (26).[218] The most detailed description is that of Aphrodite's hair ahead of the beauty contest (82–4): here, acoustic vividness (beside visual) is achieved through a redundancy of both hair-related terms (καλύπτρην,[219] κομάων, πλοκάμους, χαίτην) and of the word χρυσῷ, as well as through the alliteration of κ, especially in the initial of the first and last word in 82 and 83, and of χ, which is also the initial of the first and the last word in 84.

The image of Aphrodite (or another goddess) doing her toilette, and especially fixing her hairstyle, is extremely popular, and Colluthus pays homage to many models.[220] The goddess' coquettishness was a standard feature of the beauty contest as presented in vase-painting and sculpture,[221] as we will see more in detail below.

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217 Agosti 2006a; Heslin 2005.

218 The description of his hair is rich with Dionysus-related allusions, see n. 244 p. 190.

219 Christodorus uses the same words to describe Aphrodite in his ekphrasis of the goddess' statue in the gymnasium of Zeuxippos in Constantinople: χρυσείη … καλύπτρη, see Tissoni 2000a, 123–124.

220 Aside from the passages mentioned *infra*, Aphrodite's bath is described in *Od.* 8.364–6 (the passage reappears almost unchanged in *h.Aphr.* 61–5) and *Cypria* fr. 4 and 5 Allen; Hera's is described in Nonn. *Dion*. 32.10–37.

221 Clairmont 1951, 45, 48, 61 (twice), 63, 109. In particular, Bulloch 1985, 130 recalls Athen. 687c (=Soph. fr. 361) τὴν μὲν Ἀφροδίτην Ἡδονήν τινα οὖσαν δαίμονα μύρῳ τε ἀλειφομένην παράγει καὶ κατοπτριζομένην, τὴν δὲ Ἀθηνᾶν Φρόνησιν οὖσαν καὶ Νοῦν, ἔτι δ' Ἀρετὴν ἐλαίῳ χριομένην καὶ γυμναζομένην.

Let us reconstruct the goddess' hairstyle, which was correctly interpreted by Matthews through comparison of various models.[222] Firstly, Homer describes Hera's hairstyle in *Il.* 14.175–7:

τῷ ῥ' ἥ γε χρόα καλὸν ἀλειψαμένη ἰδὲ χαίτας
πεξαμένη χερσὶ πλοκάμους ἔπλεξε φαεινοὺς
καλοὺς ἀμβροσίους ἐκ κράατος ἀθανάτοιο.

Therewith she anointed her beautiful body, and she combed her long hair, and with her hands plaited the shiny braids, fair and ambrosial, that streamed from her immortal head.

Hera then proceeds to put on a dress woven for her by Athena and borrows a girdle from Aphrodite. The Homeric passage is ironically played with by Callimachus, who, in *h.* 5.21–2, contrasts Aphrodite's elaborate beauty routine with Athena's natural beauty: Κύπρις δὲ διαυγέα χαλκὸν ἑλοῖσα πολλάκι τὰν αὐτὰν δὶς μετέθηκε κόμαν, "But Cypris took a shining mirror and often altered the same lock",[223] and especially 31–2: οἴσετε καὶ κτένα οἱ παγχρύσεον, ὡς ἀπὸ χαίταν πέξηται, λιπαρὸν σμασαμένα πλόκαμον, "and bring her [Athena] a comb all of gold, that she may comb her hair, once she has anointed her glossy tresses", where the similarity of the language with Colluthus is striking (see below).[224]

Secondly, in Apollonius *Arg.* 3.45–50, Aphrodite is visited by Athena and Hera while she is fixing her hair, and thus interrupts her coiffure:

λευκοῖσιν δ' ἑκάτερθε κόμας ἐπιειμένη ὤμοις
κόσμει χρυσείῃ διὰ κερκίδι, μέλλε δὲ μακρούς
πλέξασθαι πλοκάμους· [...]·
ἀτὰρ μετέπειτα καὶ αὐτή
ἵζανεν, ἀψήκτους δὲ χεροῖν ἀνεδήσατο χαίτας.

222 Matthews 1996.

223 The detail of Aphrodite insisting on the same lock twice reappears in Nonn. *Dion.* 32.12–13 πολλάκι δ' ἰσάζουσα καθειμένον ἄχρι μετώπου / πλαζομένης ἔστησε μετήλυδα βότρυν ἐθείρης, and in Tib. 1.8.10, who imitates Callimachus, *saepeque mutates disposuisse comas*, where he compares Foloe's natural beauty to Marato's, which is artificial.

224 Bullock 1985, 142.

> Having let her hair down over her white shoulders on either side, she was parting it with a golden comb and was about to braid the long plaits. [. . .] And then she herself sat down and tied up her uncombed hair with her hands.

Like Callimachus, Apollonius draws on the Homeric passage above, so πλέξασθαι—ἔπλεξε, χεροῖν –χερσί, and the shared πλοκάμους and χαίτας. Medea's toilette in *Arg*. 3.828–35 also comes into the picture:

> ξανθὰς μὲν ἀνήψατο χερσὶν ἐθείρας,
> αἵ οἱ ἀτημελίῃ καταειμέναι ἠερέθοντο·
> [. . .] δῦνε δὲ πέπλον
> καλόν, ἐυγνάμπτοισιν ἀρηρέμενον περόνῃσιν,
> ἀμβροσίῳ δ' ἐφύπερθε καρήατι βάλλε καλύπτρη
> ἀργυφέην.

> With her hands she gathered up her golden tresses which were floating round her shoulders in careless disarray, [. . .] and she donned a beautiful robe, fitted with well-bent clasps, and above on her head, divinely fair, she threw a veil gleaming like silver.[225]

By comparing the three passages, Matthews clarified that Colluthus, like Apollonius, employs three different words for hair: κομάων at 83 (Ap. Rh. κόμας) is a generic term for hair,[226] πλοκάμους at 84 (Ap. Rh., Call. and Hom. πλοκάμους) is braided hair,[227] and χαίτην at 84 (Ap. Rh., Call. and Hom. χαίτας) is loose, unbraided hair.[228]

This elaborate hairstyle is also sported by the statue of Aphrodite in Christodorus' ekphrasis (*AP* 2.81 Christ. χρυσείῃ πλοκαμῖδας ὑποσφίγξασα καλύπτρῃ),[229] and by Claudian's Venus in his *Gigantomachy*[230] 43–54, as well spotted by Livrea;[231] in my opinion, her portrait was the main model for Colluthus' Aphrodite. I quote here the full passage:

225 Trans. R.C. Seaton.
226 *Il*. 17.51; Nonn. *Dion*. 32.16; Call. *h*. 5.22.
227 Nonn. *Dion*. 32.28, Hera's toilette; Eur. *Hec*. 923; Call. *h*. 5.32.
228 Nonn. *Dion*. 43.59; Call. *h*. 5.31.
229 Tissoni 2000a, 123–24.
230 From here onwards, I will refer only to Claudian's Greek *Gigantomachy*, unless otherwise specified.
231 Livrea 2000, 441–43.

Κύπρις δ' οὔτε βέλος φέρεν, οὐχ ὅπλον, ἀλλ'ἐκόμιζεν
ἀγλαΐην· θεμένη γὰρ ἐπ'ὄμμασιν ἄγγελον αὐγήν,
πρῶτα μὲν ἀπλεκέας περόνῃ διεκρίνατο χαίτας
καὶ πλεκτὰς ἔσφιγξε πυκνοῖς περιπλέγμασι σειράς,
στίμμεϊ δ'ὀφθαλμῶν ἐρατοὺς ὑπεγράψατο κανθούς.
λεπτὰς δ'εὐανέμοιο ῥαφὰς χαλάσασα χιτῶνος
πορφυρέων οὐ κρύπτεν ὑφ' εἵμασιν ἄνθεα μαζῶν,
ὄμματος εἰς ἄγρην ὡπλισμλενη· εἶχε γὰρ αὐτή
πλέγμα κόρυν, δόρυ μαζόν, ὀφρῦν βέλος, ἀσπίδα κάλλος,
ὅπλα μέλη, θέλγητρον ἐν ἄλγεσιν· εἰ δέ τις αὐτῇ
ὄμμα βάλοι, δέδμητο, βέλος δ'ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἐάσας
ὡς Ἄρεως αἰχμῇ τῇ Κύπριδος ὄλλυτο μορφῇ.

Cypris did not bring a dart, or a weapon, but she brought
Beauty: for she placed before her eyes the bright messenger,
And first she parted her unplaited hair with a pin
And tied up her plaited locks in tight tresses,
Then she drew a line with kohl under the lovely corners of her eyes.
And she loosened the fine fastenings of her robe that gave in easily to the wind,
And she did not hide underneath her garments the flowers of her flushing breasts,
Armed for the chase of the eye.[232] For she had
A chignon as a helmet, her breasts as a spear, her look as a dart, her beauty as a shield,
Her curves as weapons, a charm among the pains. If someone
Gazed upon her, he was subdued, letting the sword fall from his hand
He was killed by the beauty of Cypris as by the spear of Ares.

Through direct comparison of Claudian and the above-mentioned texts, it is possible to identify the exact sequence of steps involved:

1. Firstly, the goddess parts: διεκρίνατο 45—Coll. 83 διαστήσασα
2. with a hair pin or clip: περόνῃ 45—Coll. 83 περόνην θυόεντα—Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 3.46 χρυσείῃ διὰ κερκίδι—and also Claud. *Nupt. Hon. et M.* 102–3 *haec morsu numerosi dentis eburno multifidum discrimen erat*, and *Rapt.*

232 Claudian's passage clearly alludes to Pl. *Phaedr*. 250d, where beauty enters the lover's soul through their eyes, a concept that, as we shall see in Chapter 3, returns in Colluthus' scene of Paris and Helen's meeting.

*Pros.* 2.15–17 *illi multifidos crinis sinuatur in orbes Idalia divisus acu sudata marito fibula purpureos gemma suspendit amictu,* "her hair was twisted into many curls, parted with a Cyprian pin; a brooch, the sweated toil of her husband, supported her purple cloak with its gem"; in the following passages Hera and Medea pin their robes, not their hair, with gold brooches,: *Il.* 14.180 περονᾶτο—Nonn. *Dion.* 32.15 περόνην—Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.833

3. the loose hair: χαίτας 45—Coll. 84 χαίτην—*Il.* 14.175–6 Χαίτας πεξαμένη—Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.45–6 κόμας κόσμει—Call. *h.* 5.31–2 χαίταν πέξηται
4. next, she binds her plaited tresses: πλεκτάς … σειράς 46—Coll. 84 πλοκάμους—*Il.* 14. 176 πλοκάμους—Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.46–7 μακροὺς πλέξασθαι πλοκάμους—Christ. 81 πλοκαμῖδας ὑποσφίγξασα—Call. 51 πλόκαμον, in a hair bun, πλέγμα κόρυν[233]
5. and anoints them with gold: Coll. 84 χρυσῷ μὲν πλοκάμους, χρυσῷ δ' ἐστέψατο χαίτην—*Il.* 14.180—*h.Aphr.* 65—Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.46 and 828—Christ. *AP* 2.81 χρυσείῃ καλύπτρῃ—Claud. *Rapt.* 1.138 *flava Ceres.*

Colluthus' narrative here follows point by point his models' version: this type of orderly sequence, reminiscent of catalogues, was synonymous of truthfulness in Homeric narrative.[234] What did this hairstyle look like, then? Matthews suggests a similarity with Euphorbus' hair described in *Il.* 17.52 πλοχμοί θ', οἳ χρυσῷ τε καὶ ἀργύρῳ ἐσφήκωντο, "his hair was drenched in blood, and his plaits, that were braided with gold and silver",[235] but the style described by Colluthus looks more like Anthea's hair on the occasion of Artemis' procession as described by Xenophon Ephesius in *Eph.* 1.2.6 κόμη ξανθή, ἡ πολλὴ καθειμένη, ὀλίγη πεπλεγμένη, πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀνέμων φορὰν κινουμένη, where πεπλεγμένη refers to part of the hair being braided, while most of it is let down loose (καθειμένη).[236] Speaking of loose hair being tossed by the breeze, like Apollo's in Coll. 25–6 χρυσείοις δ' ἑκάτερθε τινασσόμενος πλοκάμοισι βότρυς ἀκερσεκόμης ζεφύρῳ στυφελίζετο χαίτης, Athenaeus, quoting a passage from Asius,[237] says that the Samians, on the occasion of Hera's celebrations, combed their hair out of their braids (πλοκάμους κτενίσαντο) and then let their loose hair (χαῖτας), held by

233 Nonn. *Dion.* 2.271 περιπλέγδην, 12.199 and 36.368 περιπλεκής; see Livrea 2000, 442.
234 Finkelberg 1998, 129–30.
235 Matthews 1996.
236 Eu. *BA*. 695 καθεῖσαν εἰς ὤμους κόμας, *IT* 51–52 κόμας ξανθὰς καθεῖναι.
237 As. fr. 13.5 Bernabé/Davies, in Athen. 12.525 ef, from Duris of Samos, *FGrHist.* 76 F 60.

gold bands, down on their chest and shoulders, free to move with the winds.[238] The hairstyle with a chignon of plaits on the top of the head, and the rest of the hair let loose on the shoulders, is typical of late antiquity,[239] as described in fourth century AD by Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium in Cappadocia, in his homily *In mulierem Peccatricem* 6.143–8 against the libertine dames of his time:

> Ὢ πόσους νεανίσκους
> κατέθελγον μεστὸν ἀναιδείας βλέμμα περιφέρουσα. Ἐπὶ λύμῃ
> γὰρ τῶν θεατῶν ὡραϊζομένη πῇ μὲν πολυπλόκοις σειραῖς τὴν
> κεφαλὴν ἐπύργουν, πῇ δὲ νομάδας πλοκάμων ἐκ κορυφῆς εἴων
> κατὰ μετώπου πλανᾶσθαι· ἄλλοτε δὲ τὰς παρειὰς ἐφοίνισσον καὶ
> τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς κατέγραφον

> Oh how many young men I enslaved to my charm flaunting a look full of shamelessness! In fact, for the sake of insult of the onlookers, I used to build a tower of curled locks on my head beautifying myself, while I allowed the stray locks to casually flow from the top of my head down to my forehead. On other occasions I put some blush on my cheeks and I drew a line under my eyes.

Artworks may also have played a role here as Aphrodite is always represented as sporting elaborate hairstyles, beginning with the famous portrait of Aphrodite Anadyomene by Apelles. The marble Aphrodite of Milos, the Crouching Aphrodite, the Syracuse Aphrodite and the goddess as portrayed in the cameo Portland vase, all sport an elaborate hairstyle with pins at the back of their head.[240] The popularity of Aphrodite remained strong during late antiquity (there were at least six statues of the goddess in Constantinople),[241] also in Egypt.[242] The goddess continued to be a favourite subject of many artworks

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238 Matthews 1996, 39 explains how the practice of marching to the Heraeum with braided hair was considered a faux pas.

239 Livrea 2000, 442, who lists the full bibliography on the tower hairstyle from Knecht 1972, 59–60.

240 Aphrodite of Milos, 130–100 BC. The Louvre, Paris, Crouching Aphrodite, Roman copy from the second century BC after a Hellenistic original, British Museum, London, Syracuse Aphrodite, from the second century AD, based on the original from the fourth century BC, Archaeological Museum of Athens, Portland vase, dated between 5 and 25 AD, today at the British Museum, London.

241 Papagiannaki 2010, 324–9.

242 Papagiannaki 2010, 338.

during late antiquity and the Middle Ages, as her image evolved from a pagan religious icon of both marriage and sexuality to a decorative symbol of marriage that was also accepted within Christian contexts.[243] The iconography of the goddess arranging her hair, in particular, continued to enjoy popularity in late antiquity.[244]

The Aphrodite of Rhodes is a particularly relevant model as the goddess is represented in the crouching position and in the act of parting her hair into two locks.[245] This motif penetrated the Egyptian artistic tradition as it is frequently found in Coptic artworks such as textiles, sculptures, reliefs, carved wood and ivory, dining and toilet sets, jewellery and terracotta.[246] In many of these artworks the goodess emerges from a seashell supported by the Tritons, one knee bent and both arms stretched out to part her hair into two locks,[247] surrounded by the Loves, and often wearing a veil, and in numerous Greek artworks from later periods.[248] Contamination of Greek and Egyptian traditions is also evident in a funeral stele at the Museo Egizio in Turin, in which a female figure wearing a tiara is crouching on two crocodiles and parting her hair in two locks,[249] which has been interpreted as a memorial for a deceased woman who is here represented as goddess Isis, and assimilated to Aphrodite.[250]

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243 See Papagiannaki 2010 for a comprehensive survey of artworks depicting Aphrodite from the fourth to the tenth century AD, in particular ivory and bone caskets with images of Aphrodite that were especially commissioned as wedding gifts (330–46). See also Buono 1987, 85–95.

244 See, e.g. a silver statuette of Aphrodite holding a mirror and arranging her hair (350–351 AD) from Kaiseraugst, today at Augst, Römermuseum 62.59; silver hairpin with an Aphrodite holding a mirror in her right hand and a lock of her own hair in her left hand (Dalton 1901, 37 n. 233), today at the British Museum, London.

245 Aphrodite of Rhodes, first century AD, Archaeological Museum of Rhodes.

246 Papagiannaki 2010, 330 and 336; Buono 1987, 90; Del Francia 1984, 209–216, and 220 (with an example of this iconography of Aphrodite in a textile representing the judgement of Paris). See Figs. 1 and 2.

247 Del Francia 1984, 218 discusses how the two thematic streams of the figurative representation of Aphrodite (the birth and the crouching) enjoyed vast and independent popularity, but in time the original features of this iconography (the birth and the toilette) gave way to the two key themes of the seashell and the gesture of lifting her hair.

248 From *LIMC s.v.* Aphrodite: n. 114 (p. 15), 424 (p. 40), 425, 430, 431 and 432 (p. 41), 445, 446, 447, 448, and 449 (p. 42), 450 and 454 (p. 43), 502 (p. 49), 516 (p. 50), 541, 543 and 545 (p. 53), 667 (p. 66), 672, 677 and 679 (p. 67), 681, 682, 683, 684, 686a and 687 (p. 68), 1038 (p.103), 1251 (p. 126); *s.v.* Aphrodite (in per. or.) n. 87—a terracotta statuette from the third century AD—(p. 162), 192—a painted terracotta lantern from the second century AD—(p. 166).

249 Inv. 1668, Museo Egizio (Turin).

250 Adriani 1944 and 1951.

FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2

FIGURES 1 AND 2 *Gold and Lapis Lazuli Necklace, Early Seventh Century AD.*
© DUMBARTON OAKS, BYZANTINE COLLECTION, WASHINGTON, DC.

The motif of the goddess parting her hair, popular in Coptic art,[251] was still popular in late-antiquity figurative arts in Egypt:[252] for instance, in a textile probably representing Aphrodite, the elaborate hairstyle of the goddess involves a chignon on the top of the head, central parting, two side locks falling on the sides of the face, and a single lock of hair falling on the nape,[253] and in an Egyptian gold and lapis lazuli necklace dating from the early seventh century AD, Aphrodite is parting her hair (Figs. 1 and 2).[254]

A particularly relevant artwork is the ivory pyxis dating from the late fifth to the early sixth century AD (below),[255] which represents the judgement of Paris. The two scenes that are carved here are also two key moments of Colluthus' narration: on one side of the pyxis (Fig. 3), in fact, Eris is about to throw the

251 E.g.: a bronze figurine from Egypt (second century AD), *LIMC* n. 44 *s.v.* Aphrodite (in per. or.), 159.

252 See, for instance, terracotta vase (fourth century AD), Kassel, Staatliche Kunstammlungen (*LIMC* n. 988 *s.v.* Aphrodite, 96).

253 Inv. 9911, Berlin, Staatliche Museen; on this see Del Francia 1984, 217.

254 *LIMC s.v.* Aphrodite n. 89.

255 *LIMC s.v.* Paris n. 126. Similar representations survive until the seventh century AD (Del Francia 1984, 220).

FIGURE 3

FIGURE 4

FIGURES 3 AND 4 *Ivory pyxis dating from the late fifth to the early sixth century* AD.
© THE WALTERS ARTS MUSEUM, BALTIMORE.

apple amidst the banquet of the gods (Colluthus 62–3), while on the other side (Fig. 4) Hermes crowns Aphrodite as the winner of the contest (Colluthus 167). In the pyxis, the goddess only wears a cloak on her shoulders (while in the *Abduction* she exposes her chest), she is surrounded by Hera and an armed Athena (as in Colluthus), and most interestingly, she is arranging her hair, as she does in our text.

This object probably belonged to a woman's toilet, and it may have contained jewellery, cosmetics or perfume. At this time the goddess still widely symbolised desire, beauty and marriage; this is evident both from the number and the function of the artworks displaying her as the chosen subject, and from the contemporary literary evidence: in line with Colluthus' highly sensual description of Aphrodite and desire-centred tale, his contemporary John Malalas presented the goddess as such:

> ὁ Πάρις […] ἐξέθετο λόγον ἐγκωμιαστικὸν εἰς τὴν Ἀφροδίτην, λέγων μείζονα αὐτῆς θεὰν μὴ εἶναι μήτε τὴν Ἥραν μήτε τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν. τὴν γὰρ Ἀφροδίτην τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν εἶπεν εἶναι· ἐκ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας οὖν πάντα τίκτεσθαι εἶπεν ἐν τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ἐκθέσει. διὰ τοῦτο ἱστοροῦσιν, ὅτι ὁ Πάρις ἔκρινε μεταξὺ Παλλάδος καὶ Ἥρας καὶ Ἀφροδίτης καὶ τῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ ἔδωκε τὸ μῆλον, ὅ ἐστι τὴν νίκην, εἰπών, ὅτι ἡ ἐπιθυμία, ὅ ἐστιν ἡ Ἀφροδίτη, πάντα τίκτει καὶ τέκνα καὶ σοφίαν καὶ σωφροσύνην καὶ τέχνας καὶ τὰ ἄλλα πάντα ἐν λογικοῖς καὶ ἀλόγοις· μεῖζον δὲ αὐτῆς καὶ βέλτιον μὴ εἶναι.

> Paris [...] wrote an encomium on Aphrodite, saying that there was no goddess greater than she, not even Hera or Athena. For he said that Aphrodite was Desire; so he said in his account that everything comes into being through Desire. Because of this, they tell a story that Paris judged between Pallas, Hera and Aphrodite and gave the apple, that is, the victory, to Aphrodite, saying that Desire, that is, Aphrodite, brings everything into being—children, wisdom, temperance, the arts and everything else both in rational and irrational beings; nothing exists which is greater and better than it.[256]

The presence of Aphrodite on this pyxis, then, is explained by her association with beauty, to which the owner of this pyxis would have aspired.[257] It has also been argued that the image depicted on this pyxis, as that of the contemporary Zurich pyxis and a medieval ivory and bone casket dating from the tenth century AD,[258] reflected a scene from a mimic play,[259] due to the popularity of such shows at the time, in spite of the Puritanism that was being promoted by the Fathers of the Church.

For Livrea, it is very likely that Claudian's Venus, who also wore a chignon on top of her head, was inspired by the figurative arts, but he cannot stretch as far as to identify his model with the Gigantomachy on the doors of the Artemision in Ephesos, a gift from Trajan after the war against the Scythians, an artwork which was later transferred to the senate in Byzantium and then described by Themistius in the fourth century AD.[260] However, although Aphrodite was

256 Io. Mal. 5.92–3 (trans. E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys and R. Scott).

257 Papagiannaki 2010, 338–9.

258 The Zurich ivory pyxis (fifth-sixth century AD) depicts Aphrodite with Adonis, a motif that was also popular in contemporary mosaic floors especially in Antioch (Papagiannaki 2010, 341–2); in the back panel of the pyxis two dancers hold a wreath while a musician plays a flute. The Veroli Casket (tenth century AD), today at the Victoria and Albert Museum 216–1865, depicts the rape of Europa (on the lid); on the front panel, a putto holds a mask and looks at a figure who has been interpreted as Phaedra, Helen or Aphrodite, while another putto draws a thorn from her foot, and a male figure (Castor or Hippolytus) holds the reins of a horse (Papagiannki 2010, 343–5).

259 Papagiannaki 2010, 340–46.

260 Them. *Or.* 13.176d–177a and *Or.* 34.23.2.227.23: in this panegyric of Emperor Gratian, Themistius compares the effect of the princeps' moral beauty over the barbarians to that of Eros and Aphrodite's beauty over the Giant in the Gigantomachy (Giomi 2003, 374). For Livrea 2000, 443, Claudian focussed here on the goddess' preparation, champion of "armi paradossali" (i.e. beauty), a topic which will be discussed later in this chapter; see Gigli-Piccardi 1985, 57–63, and Clairmont 1951, 78–87.

often represented in artworks about the Gigantomachy,[261] she is not described at all in Themistius' passage.

The poet meant to re-create the scene as a pretty portrait of a vain lady. During her speech to Paris, Aphrodite shows no concern for modesty, as she lifts her robe and does not mind showing her breasts (οὐκ ᾐδέσσατο Κύπρις 156, οὐκ ἐμνήσατο μαζῶν 158), just like, again, Claudian's Aphrodite in *Gig*. 49 πορφυρέων οὐ κρύπτεν ὑφ' εἵμασιν ἄνθεα μαζῶν, and Aphrodite's statue in Christodorus' ekphrasis (*AP* 2.79 ἀπὸ στέρνοιο δὲ γυμνή, and 2.100 γυμνήν—Coll. 155 γυμνώσασα). Colluthus may also have been inspired by seeing a statue, or by reading the celebratory epigrams *APl* 160, 162, 163, 168 on Praxiteles' Aphrodite from Cnydos. Thus, a description of the goddess grooming herself seems the natural complement to such a vain personality, especially if we go by the relevance given to grooming within the epyllion; with the goddesses, Paris also prepares himself for his meeting with Helen, which is also a judgement.

One last consideration may be made on the basis of comparison with this passage from Claudian. Giomi interprets Aphrodite's nudity as an allegory for the Neoplatonic ascension and purification that is necessary to approach the divine.[262] On the other hand, the spiritual death of the Giant is well expressed at 55 by the fact that he is "dressed", as clothes symbolise matter and thus death.[263] Colluthus may then be ironically alluding to the fact that, while Aphrodite, by stripping off, is paradoxically getting closer to the divine, the other two goddesses are still fully clothed and are going nowhere other than the material world. It would be a double victory for Aphrodite: Colluthus exploits a Neoplatonic allegory to achieve an ironic output. In this case, in fact, in contrast with the passage of Paris' sea-crossing, which can be interpreted as a Neoplatonic metaphor, it would be challenging to accept this interpretation literally rather than as another ironic twist, where the goddess would be ironically ascending to God.

### 3.2 *The* Agon

After her victory, Aphrodite humiliates her rivals Hera and Athena (172–89): this passage marks a sudden change of genre to a mini-invective. Its tone is quite different from Aphrodite's previous speeches (the one to the Loves, at 86–98, and the one to Paris at 160–66), although in the first one we can already foresee

261 LIMC *s.v. Aphrodite* n. 1394–1403, especially the Pergamon altar = n. 1400.
262 Giomi 2003, 376.
263 Plot. *Enn.* 1.6.7.5–7.

some signs of her proud attitude: when she gathers the Loves around her (86),[264] she begins to speak as a vulnerable and un-warlike candidate who does not stand a chance in the contest with two very powerful rivals such as Hera and Athena (89–93). And yet, halfway through her monologue she realises that she, too, has weapons, and far more powerful than her rivals' (94–8). In the same way, while seeking to persuade Paris to give her the prize, she cockily builds up the tone to the point of questioning the value of the others' rewards (164–5).

Firstly, it needs to be clarified that we are dealing with a contest, since there has been some debate about the interpretation of line 172: Mair reads εἴξατέ μοι πολέμοιο συνήθεες, εἴξατε νίκης, "surrender to me, you, accustomed to war; yield the victory to me", but Livrea supports εἴξατέ μοι πολέμοιο, συνήθεος εἴξατε νίκης, "declare yourselves defeated in this war, yield to me the usual victory", as εἴκω goes with genitive.[265] He also thinks that the expression "accustomed to war" sounds difficult. On the contrary, this is unquestionably an *agon*: at 86 Aphrodite introduces the scene with ἐγγὺς ἀγών: "the contest is near!", thus we are definitely speaking of an ἀγὼν περὶ κάλλους, and it is Colluthus himself who clearly states this at 87: σήμερον ἀγλαΐαι με διακρίνουσι προσώπων. Moreover, the tone of Aphrodite's speech to the Loves is that of a general exhorting his soldiers before a battle: Williams rightly identifies the theme of *militia amoris*,[266] where the invitation to the Loves to help their mother may be an allusion to earth stirring up the Titans in Claudian's Latin *Gigantomachy* 27–8*: sed vos, o tandem veniens exercitus ultor, solvite Titanas vinclis, defendite matrem*.

However, it is not just a beauty contest: in her own speech to Paris, the goddess had earlier pointed out that she has nothing to do with war: δέξο με καὶ πολέμων ἐπιλήθεο,[267] [...] ἔργα μόθων οὐκ οἶδα· τί γὰρ σακέων Ἀφροδίτῃ; [...] ἀντὶ μὲν ἠνορέης ἐρατὴν παράκοιτιν ὀπάσσω, " 'Pick me and forget wars: [...] I do not know the works of war. For what has Aphrodite to do with shields? Instead of manly bravery, I will give you a charming bride" (160–4), benchmarking herself and her reward on a completely different level to Hera and especially Athena (who had offered the kingdom of Asia and the gift of excellence in war). Her statement to Paris comes across as false and deceitful: the goddess, in her speech to the Loves, had actually reported what people say about her rivals,

264 The meaning of περιπτύξασθε is to be interpreted in this way, not simply as "embrace" as Orsini 1972, 5 and others translate, see Williams 2001, 179.

265 Livrea 1968a, 151–2.

266 Williams 2001, 179.

267 A close model is Nonn. *Dion*. 10.111, although the circumstances are quite different (Ino is ready to throw herself into the sea for having killed her son Melicertes).

and listed her own alleged deficiencies: “I am unwarlike”, she says.[268] However, she had then reached the conclusion that, while she may not own metal weapons as the other goddesses,[269] no one masters the equally lethal weapons of love and pain as effectively as she can. At 91–8 she says:

καὶ πολέμων βασίλειαν ἀεὶ καλέουσιν Ἀθήνην·
μούνη Κύπρις ἄναλκις ἔην θεός. οὐ βασιλήων
κοιρανίην, οὐκ ἔγχος ἀρήιον, οὐ βέλος ἕλκω.
ἀλλὰ τί δειμαίνω περιώσιον ἀντὶ μὲν αἰχμῆς
ὡς θοὸν ἔγχος ἔχουσα μελίφρονα δεσμὸν ἐρώτων;
σκῆπτρον ἔχω καὶ κέντρον ἄγω καὶ τόξον ἀείρω,
κεστόν, ὅθεν φιλότητος ἐμῆς ἐμὸν οἶστρον ἑλοῦσαι
πολλάκις ὠδίνουσι καὶ οὐ θνήσκουσι γυναῖκες.

As for Athena, they always call her the queen of battles.
Only I, Cypris, am an unwarlike goddess. I wield no sovereignty,
Like a king should, I brandish no warlike spear, nor do I draw the bow.
But why do I fear beyond measure, since, instead of a spear
I have as my swift sword the honeyed girdle[270] of the Loves?

268 The model for this is *Il.* 5.330–3 Κύπριν … ἄναλκις ἔην θεός, οὐδὲ θεάων / τάων αἵ τ᾽ ἀνδρῶν πόλεμον κάτα κοιρανέουσιν, / οὔτ᾽ ἄρ᾽ Ἀθηναίη οὔτε πτολίπορθος Ἐνυώ. “Cypris … a weak goddess, she is not one of those goddesses who dominate the battles of men. She is neither Athena nor Enyo, destroyer of cities”.

269 Williams 2001, 179–83.

270 Colluthus, following Nonnus, identifies the κεστός with a μίτρη παρθενίη (or a magic charm) worn around the breasts, while Christodorus retrieves the Homeric interpretation of it as an embroidered belt that tied across the chest and at the back (Tissoni 2000a, 130–31) in *AP* 2.100–101 ἐπὶ στέρνων δὲ θεαίνης / αὐχένος ἐξ ὑπάτοιο χυθεὶς ἐλελίζετο κεστός and 289–90 ἀμφὶ δὲ μαζοῖς / κεστὸς ἕλιξ κεχάλαστο, χάρις δ᾽ ἐνενήχετο κεστῷ. See also Antiph. Mac. *AP* 6.88.1–2 Αὐτή σοι Κυθέρεια τὸν ἱμερόεντ᾽ ἀπὸ μαστῶν, / Ἰνώ, λυσαμένη κεστὸν ἔδωκεν ἔχειν. Homer had already explained that Aphrodite’s chest was precisely the hiding place for all her devices in *Il.* 14.214–17 ἀπὸ στήθεσφιν ἐλύσατο κεστὸν ἱμάντα / ποικίλον, ἔνθα δέ οἱ θελκτήρια πάντα τέτυκτο· / ἔνθ᾽ ἔνι μὲν φιλότης, ἐν δ᾽ ἵμερος, ἐν δ᾽ ὀαριστὺς / πάρφασις, ἥ τ᾽ ἔκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων, “She removed from her chest the embroidered multicoloured belt, where all the enchantments are: love, and desire and flirts are there, and seduction, which steals the reason of even wise men”. Lucian also, in *Dear. Iud.* 10, may be alluding to such an item, as Athena prompts Paris not to let Aphrodite undress until she has removed her girdle, as this is a magic object: Μὴ πρότερον ἀποδύσῃς αὐτήν, ὦ Πάρι, πρὶν ἂν τὸν κεστὸν ἀπόθηται—φαρμακὶς γάρ ἐστιν—μή σε καταγοητεύσῃ δι᾽ αὐτοῦ, “Paris, do

I do hold a sceptre, and I do wield a spur and I do raise a bow:[271]
That girdle, from where women catch my sting of desire,
And travail many times, but never to the point of death.[272]

Colluthus is here establishing that Aphrodite's seductive weapons are equally powerful as the military ones by making the goddess herself say what Claudian had already said of Venus in the *Gigantomachy* 50–4:

εἶχε γὰρ αὐτή
πλέγμα κόρυν, δόρυ μαζόν, ὀφρῦν βέλος, ἀσπίδα κάλλος,
ὅπλα μέλη, θέλγητρον ἐν ἄλγεσιν· εἰ δέ τις αὐτῇ
ὄμμα βάλοι, δέδμητο, βέλος δ'ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἐάσας
ὡς Ἄρεως αἰχμῇ τῇ Κύπριδος ὄλλυτο μορφῇ

For she had a chignon as a helmet,
Her breasts as a spear, her look as a dart, her beauty as a shield,
Her curves as weapons, a charm among the pains. If someone
Gazed upon her, he was subdued, letting the dart fall from his hand
He was killed by the beauty of Cypris as by the spear of Ares.

The repetition of βέλος (Claud. 43, 51, 54—Coll. 93) and αἰχμή (Claud. 54—Coll. 94), and the statement that the goddess' body parts and equipment are weapons as powerful as those of Ares, match perfectly (Claud. 52–4—Coll. 92–3) and climax into the shared statement that women are prepared to suffer the pains of childbirth for love (Claud. 52—Coll. 97–8).

A second model for this passage, also dependent on Claudian,[273] is Nonnus *Dion.* 35.168–79: here, an Indian prince falls in love with the girl he has killed,

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not let her undress until she takes off her girdle, for she is an enchantress; or else she may bewitch you with it".

271 Note the symmetry (which features in all of the other goddesses' speeches, see below) of the passage, in which her assets correspond precisely to her deficiencies: ἔγχος corresponds to κέντρον, and τόξον to βέλος. Only κεστόν fails to match with κοιρανίην, hence Orsini 1972, 22 supposes a lacuna. However, I accept here William's conjecture of σκῆπτρον, which is not only justified by parablepsy (the first word of the next line is again κεστόν), but also by the fact that the girdle had actually just been described, and ultimately matches with Hera's κοιρανίην, see Williams 2001, 181, who reveals how, with this restoration, Aphrodite's speech would be "as elegant as her coiffure".

272 Note the variation at 364 Νηιάδες ζώουσι καὶ οὐ κτείνουσι γυναῖκας.

273 Frangoulis and Gerlaud 2006, 128–9.

and is advised to beware of warlike Aphrodite (Coll. ἄναλκις 92—Nonn. ἀπτόλεμος 168) as he learns about the power of eros:[274]

> [...] ἀπτόλεμος γὰρ
> Κύπρις ἀριστεύει πλέον Ἄρεος, οὐδὲ χατίζει
> ἀσπίδος, οὐ μελίης ποτὲ δεύεται· ἀμφότερον γὰρ
> ἔγχος ἐμὸν πέλε κάλλος, ἐμὸν ξίφος ἔπλετο μορφή,
> καὶ βλεφάρων ἀκτῖνες ἐμοὶ γεγάασιν ὀιστοί·
> μαζὸς ἀκοντίζει πλέον ἔγχεος· ἱμερόεις γὰρ
> ἀντὶ δοριθρασέος θαλαμηπόλος ἔπλετο Μορρεύς.
> μὴ Σπάρτης ἐπίβηθι, μαχήμονες ἧχι πολῖται
> χάλκεον εἶδος ἔχουσι κορυσσομένης Ἀφροδίτης,
> μή σε δόρυ κρατέουσα τεῷ πλήξειε σιδήρῳ.
> οὐ τόσον αἰχμάζεις, ὅσον ὀφρύες· οὐ τόσον αἰχμαὶ
> ἀνέρας οὐτάζουσιν, ὅσον βάλλουσιν ὀπωπαί·

> You see, unwarlike Aphrodite is more valiant than Ares, and does not even need the shield, never mind the spear: beauty is my spear, my looks are my sword, the gaze of my eyes are my darts; a breast strikes harder than a spear: from brave warrior Morrheus has turned to loving husband. It is better for you not to go to Sparta, where those bellicose citizens have a bronze icon of armed Aphrodite: I would not want her brandishing her spear and strike you with her iron! You lack the fighting power of eyelashes; spears do not wound men as much as eyes do.

The comparison of Colluthus' passage to Nonnus' leaves no doubt about the effectiveness of the goddess' power: her monologue, which had begun as the pitiful request for help of an unconfident mother, actually grows into a war cry from which the goddess emerges stronger than ever, ready to face her competition and, in the eyes of the readers, armed with much better chances than her rivals.

In fact, a statue of armed Aphrodite, called the Amyclaion *Aphrodite*, a work of Polycletus (the Young) of Argos, did exist,[275] as we learn from Nonnus'

274 The model of Nonnus' passage is Theocr. *Id.* 23, where a man in love with a cruel boy (23.19) also kills himself, while his ἐρώμενος is soon punished as a statue of Eros falls on him and kills him: before he dies, he learns his lesson about the power of eros at 23.64 (Hadjittofi 2008, 122).

275 The statue was, according to Paus. 3.15.10, under a tripod in the Amyclaion, Apollo's sanctuary, and was also the object of Antimach *AP* 9.321, Leon. *AP* 9.320, *APl* 173–77, see Vian 1997, 144.

passage; therefore,[276] it is possible that Colluthus had this artwork (or a notion of it) in mind, as this statue was in Amyclae, a town 5km south of Sparta, which Colluthus mentions at 241 with the digression of Hyacinth. Nonnus mentions the same statue once again in *Dion.* 43.6, during the *agon* of Dionysus and Poseidon, to express the idea of bellicose love.[277] It can hardly be a coincidence that an armed Aphrodite, possibly the ekphrasis of a statue in Amyclae, is mentioned in two contexts of *agon*.

### 3.3 *Aphrodite's Invective*

Aphrodite's speech to Hera and Athena after her victory (172–89) is shaped as an invective and includes the standard features of ψόγοι that were normally incorporated in imperial encomia[278] as a means of comparison with the enemies of the person to be praised. The passage can be read as an ethopoiia in which the author imagines what the goddess would have said after winning the contest.[279] The influence of ethopoiiai as a scholastic practice and as a model helps to explain why Colluthus chose to include an invective in his story, and why invective was the genre to invest in for a writer in late antiquity.

Contrasting encomia and invective—which shared structure and style of ethopoiiai—[280] offered poets the opportunity to display their rhetorical ability. Nonnus exploits this technique, using it widely in the *Dionysiaca* to exalt Dionysus by rejecting his enemies' continuous allegations. The presence of invective in Nonnus, often accompanied by a voyeuristic interest in graphic descriptions of rapes and genitals,[281] has been interpreted as a conscious effort by the poet, as ψόγος was originally linked to the cult of Dionysus, a "god of earthly joy" as described by Agosti.[282] In *Piscator* 25, Lucian says Καίτοι ἐκεῖνοι

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276 Nonnus mentions the statue often, in *Dion.* 31.259–63 and 34.115–21.

277 Accorinti 2004, 288–89.

278 Miguélez-Cavero 2010, 35 and 40.

279 Agosti 2005a, 50.

280 Agosti 2005a, 47 and 51: in fact, these late-antique sub-genres were characterised by a higly pathetic style, defined as commatic (a concise style where points are made in a tight succession) by Nicolaus of Myra (Felten p. 66, in Kennedy 2003, 166).

281 Rape of Nicaea, *Dion.* 16.250–69; scene of Achilles and Penthesilea which comes close to necrophilia, 35.21–78. Less voyeuristic is the story of Aura in *Dion.* 48, where only a glimpse of her thigh is caught (485–6); for Lightfoot 1998, 295 n. 7, the voyeurism seems to have been transferred to Aura's almost male gaze at Artemis. Nonnus' obsession with Aura's breast, on the other hand, finds its reasons in the maiden's unrealised potential as a breastfeeder, which fits into her antisocial will to preserve her viginity and results in her rape as a punishment decreed by Nemesis as a way to instil some femininity into her (Lightfoot 1998, 293 and 305).

282 Agosti 2001, 246.

μὲν καθ' ἑνὸς ἀνδρὸς ἐτόλμων τοιαῦτα, καὶ ἐν Διονυσίοις ἐφειμένον αὐτὸ ἔδρων, καὶ τὸ σκῶμμα ἐδόκει μέρος τι τῆς ἑορτῆς, καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἴσως ἔχαιρε φιλόγελώς τις ὤν. "But they [Aristophanes and Eupolis] at least confined themselves to a single victim [Socrates], and they had the charter of Dionysus; a jest might pass at holiday time, and the laughing God might be well pleased". Colluthus may be doing something very similar: with his proem and the portrait of Paris, he has built an impressionistic bucolic scene; with his description of Strife, he has inserted a brief epic digression; now, he exploits the occasion for the goddesses' speeches to add some iambic spirit to his poem.

A panegyrist is expected to refute objections and accusations coming from his rivals, and Nonnus ensures to do so over the 48 books of his poem. The encomiast would praise his subject often by attacking his enemies in their weaker spots. Traditionally, these included origins (the enemy may be a barbarian, or not really a god: in Nonnus, for instance, Dionysus is accused of not really being the son of Zeus and of not possessing the divine attributes),[283] whatever was reprehensible in their character, and possibly the lack of ethics in their behaviour (for instance, Dionysus is often accused of cowardice by his enemies in the *Dionysiaca*).[284]

Appearance was often the target of satire and invective:[285] the panegyrist would prey on physical defects,[286] like Palladas, who, in *AP* 11.204 slanders the orator Maurus, whose snout is compared to that of an elephant, and Nonnus ridicules the Indian prince Morrheus for attempting to whiten himself in the sea before meeting Chalcomedea in *Dion.* 35.185–98; the scene is insulting on various levels: the poet has poked fun not only at the colour of the prince's skin but also at his failed attempt to succeed with an initiation of the Dionysiac cult of which the red sea is a symbol,[287] and he also plays with the well-known late antique proverb according to which washing an Ethiopian meant doing something pointless.[288] Sometimes such attacks can target inappropriate attire such

283 Iris accuses Dionysus in *Dion.* 20.196–221; a soldier at 29.52–67; Deriades in 39.33–74; Poseidon in 43.145–91; Pentheos in 44.134–83, in 45.66–94, 45.254–61 and in 46.10–51.

284 Orontes accuses Dionysus of cowardice in *Dion.* in 17.170–91; Deriades in 21.241–73, 27.22–135, and at 36.339–49.

285 Agosti 2001, 237.

286 Julian *AP* 11.367 compares a man's face to that of an ostrich, in 11.368 suggests to a hairy man to have his face shaven by scythes, and dedicates 11.369 to a dwarf. Agathias *AP* 11.372 ridicules a man as skinny as a ghost; 11.273 is against a man who is lame on the outside and on the inside.

287 Agosti 2004, 583.

288 Agosti 2001, 243.

as Dionysus' effeminate clothes in the *Dionysiaca*,[289] as this would be treated as evidence of their inner persona and potentially proof of their lack of mores.

In late antiquity, invective was as common as encomium, and it was not necessarily restricted to iambics.[290] According to Agosti, one of the reasons for the decrease in use of iambics for invectives[291] in high literature is to be seen in how late-antique education stigmatised any indecorous display (ἀπρέπεια) of loss of control or anger, the cause of invective.[292] Staying above the limit of respectfulness, and not lowering oneself to the level of vulgar insults, are standards on which writers in late antiquity prided themselves; for instance, Synesius in *Ins.* 20 satirises two philosophers, "whose dignity did not keep them from insulting one another".[293] This aspect appears in both Nonnus and Colluthus, where the aggressiveness of the person attacking contrasts clearly with the passive silence of the victim: so Semele in Nonnus *Dio*n. 9 and Aphrodite in Colluthus display audacity and lack of self-control, while Hera in both, and especially Athena in Colluthus, do not respond to the provocation and appear composed in their silence (they do not react to her speech, which is sealed by Ἥρην ἐξελάσασα καὶ ἀσχαλόωσαν Ἀθήνην 192).

Invective seems to be a preferred genre by the Egyptians in late antiquity.[294] As discussed in the first chapter of this work, the Egyptians were particularly fond of aggressive literary styles and injury. They had a reputation as liars and charlatans, but they were also known as quarrelsome and quick to lose their temper to the point of enjoying verbal injury,[295] and also as *genus hominum*

289 Orontes accuses Dionysus of effeminacy in *Dion.* 17.170–91 and 249–61; Iris in 20.196–221; Pentheus in 44.134–83.

290 Agosti 2001, 219–21.

291 The metre continued to be widely used for all that was aimed at reaching a wide audience or popularity, such as didascalic Christian poetry: Gregory of Nazianzus claimed that one of the reasons why he devoted himself to poetry was to *miscere utile dulci*, and also that part of the Scriptures were iambic compositions (*Carm.* 2.1.39). The so–called translations of hexametric poetry into trimeters were also extremely popular; they were closer to the spoken language, such as those of Callimachus and Apollonius made by Marianus of Eleutheropolis.

292 Agosti 2001, 224.

293 Pallas, in *AP* 11.299, remains above λοιδορία as this is the punishment for whoever indulges in it. Julian, in *Epist.* 80, p. 89. 15–20 Bidez, prides himself on never having abused or slandered anyone; however, he also seeks to bypass the ban imposed by *paideia* by claiming to draw inspiration from the barbarians who are free to abandon themselves to the wild iambus by composing ἄγρια μέλη since they are not obliged to display self-control (see also Agosti 2006a, 36 n. 4).

294 Cameron 1965c, 479, and Agosti 2001, 236.

295 *SHA Quadr. Tyr. Firm. Sat.* 7.4–5.

*seditiosissimum, vanissimum, iniuriosissimum*, "a breed most seditious, deceitful, prone to injury".[296] In the fourth century AD, Ammianus describes the Egyptians as *genus hominum controversum et assuetudine perplexus litigandi semper laetissimum*.[297] Earlier, Seneca had also defined Egypt as a *loquax et in contumelias praefectorum ingeniosa provincial in qua etiam qui uitauerunt culpam non effugerunt infamiam … cui etiam periculosi sales placent*, "a saucy province with a genius for insulting its governors, where even those who managed to avoid guilt could not escape slander … and they also enjoy dangerous wits".[298]

Alexandrians in particular had "a flair for invective".[299] The second-century-AD historian Herodian, speaking about Alexandrians, says πεφύκασι δέ πως εἶναι φιλοσκώμμονες καὶ λέγειν εὐστόχους ὑπογραφὰς ἢ παιδιάς, ἀπορριπτοῦντες ἐς τοὺς ὑπερέχοντας πολλὰ χαρίεντα μὲν αὐτοῖς δοκοῦντα, λυπηρὰ δὲ τοῖς σκωφθεῖσι,[300] "they are by nature fond of joking at the expense of those in high places. However witty these clever remarks may seem to those who make them, they hurt very much those who are ridiculed". This passion for ψόγος is well testified to by the existence of numerous court poets specialised in negative propaganda, such as Alexandrian Claudian, the author of *In Rufinum* and *In Eutropium* (invectives against two of Arcadius' ministers), and by Palladas, the author, also in the fourth century AD, of many invective epigrams against politicians.[301] Conscious of losing friends because of his love of ψόγος, Palladas swore that he would quit his addiction, but could not help himself in *AP* 11.340:

> Ὤμοσα μυριάκις ἐπιγράμματα μηκέτι ποιεῖν,
> πολλῶν γὰρ μωρῶν ἔχθραν ἐπεσπασάμην·
> ἀλλ᾽ ὁπόταν κατίδω τοῦ Παφλαγόνος τὸ πρόσωπον
> Πανταγάθου, στέξαι τὴν νόσον οὐ δύναμαι.

> I swore ten thousand times to make no more epigrams, for I had brought on myself the enmity of many fools, but when I set eyes on the face of the Paphlagonian Pantagathus I cannot restrain my disease.

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296 As above 8.5.

297 Ammian. 22.6.1.

298 Sen. *Dial.* 12.19.6.

299 Cameron 1965c, 479.

300 Herodn. *Hist.* 4.9.2.

301 *AP* 7.681–8 against the rhetor Gessius; 9.292 against Themistius (see Cameron 1965b); 9.393, 10.90–91 against Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria (see Cameron 1965a).

He admits that invective is Attic honey in *AP* 11.341: Αἰνίζειν μὲν ἄριστον, ὁ δὲ ψόγος ἔχθεος ἀρχή, ἀλλὰ κακῶς εἰπεῖν Ἀττικόν ἐστι μέλι, "Praising is the best thing, but blaming is the cause of enmity; but yet to slander others is Attic honey".

There is some evidence of the Egyptian habit of insulting high-profile personalities: according to Svetonius (*Vesp.* 19), Alexandrians called Vespasian stingy: *Alexandrini Cybiosacten eum vocare perseveraverunt, cognomine unius e regibus suis turpissimarum sordium*, "the inhabitants of Alexandria kept on calling him Cybiosacte, surname of one of their kings who had shown the most sordid avarice", and Alexander Severus had a similar fate, as related in the *Historia Augusta* (28): *quodam tempore festo, ut solent, Antiochenses, Aegyptii, Alexandrini lacessiverant conviciolis, et Syrum archisynagogum eum vocantes*, "on the occasion of a certain festival, the Antiochians and Egyptians and Alexandrians had annoyed him with insults, as is their custom, calling him a Syrian synagogue-chief".

In Colluthus, the goddess attacks her rivals on their origins, their appearance, and their character. This rhetorical structure[302] is visible especially in her attack against Athena: Aphrodite mocks her origins first (her birth from Zeus, not from a mother through regular childbirth, 181–3), then her appearance (she wears bronze breast-plates, 184), then her character (her preference for wars to love and her ignorance in matters of love, 185–6), and finally she returns to attack her character (her gender, 187–9).

The first part of the invective, opened by a request to admit defeat (εἴξατέ μοι 172),[303] begins with a σύγκρισις: in progymnasmata, this device was employed as a balanced judgement of both the subject of the encomium and that of the ψόγος,[304] and it also featured often in ethopoiiai.[305] Here, Aphrodite indirectly praises herself by attacking her rivals. Nonnus employed this technique widely in his *Dionysiaca*, challenging Dionysus regularly with Typhoeus, the Indians, Lycurgus, Nicaea, and Heracles.[306] In doing so, he employs all of the standard weapons that were commonly used in panegyrics: mockery, false or half-true statements, and attacks on the weakest sides of the rivals (appearance, personality and morals). In late-antique literature encomium and invective

302 The speech is rich with Alexandrine features such as Bucolic caesura at 17; repetition of ἀγλαΐη at 167, 168 and 173; chiasmos at 184 (Harries 2006, 542).

303 The line echoes *Il.* 24.716, where Priam is asking people to yield to him as he carries Hector's body on a chariot.

304 Examples from Aelius Theon, Hermogenes and others are collected in Kennedy 2003.

305 Agosti 2005a, 49.

306 Miguélez-Cavero 2010, 38–9.

followed the same rules, simply reversed;[307] the two genres often blurred into one another as the sensibility to genres faded,[308] as, for instance, in George of Pisidia's *In Alypium*, where he attacks the monk Alypius for his obesity but then twists his invective into an encomium to his own intelligence.[309]

This scene is modelled on an episode of the *Dionysiaca* (9.235–6), where Semele, proud of her son Dionysus, casts an invective on Hera and appeals to her to admit her defeat: εἴξατέ μοι· Σεμέλη γὰρ ἑὸν πόσιν ἔλλαχε μούνη τὴν αὐτὴν ἀρόωντα καὶ ὠδίνοντα γενέθλην, "Give place to me all! For Semele alone had a husband who got her pregnant and laboured for the same child". Semele had begun her speech at 208 with Ἥρη, ἐσυλήθης· Σεμέλης τόκος ἐστὶν ἀρείων "Hera, you have lost: Semele's son is the best!" Also, at 10.129–32 Semele says to her sister Ino: πόντον ἔχεις, Σεμέλη λάχε κύκλον Ὀλύμπου· εἶξον ἐμοί· Κρονίδην γὰρ ἐμῆς ἀροτῆρα γενέθλης ἀθάνατον πόσιν ἔσχον, ἐμῆς ὠδῖνα λοχείης ἀντ' ἐμέθεν τίκτοντα, "you have the sea, but Semele obtained the vault of heaven. Give way to me, because an immortal groom, the Cronides, plough my offspring and delivered in my place, suffering the labour of childbirth".[310] Nonnus often concludes his confrontations with an invitation to admit defeat:[311] in *Dion.* 12.245 Dionysus demands that Apollo admit his inferiority, and then that Ares do the same (12.251). This appeal was typical of imperial panegyrics,[312] as we see in Agathias' *AP* 4.3.47–52:

> Μή τις ἐπαυχενίοιο λιπὼν ζωστῆρα λεπάδνου
> βάρβαρος ἐς Βασιλῆα βιημάχον ὄμμα τανύσσῃ·
> μηδ' ἔτι Περσὶς ἄναλκις ἀναστείλασα καλύπτρην
> ὄρθιον ἀθρήσειεν· ἐποκλάζουσα δὲ γαίῃ
> καὶ λόφον αὐχήεντα καταγνάμπτουσα τενόντων
> Αὐσονίοις ἄκλητος ὑποκλίνοιτο ταλάντοις

307 For Cameron 1965c, 479, invective had "each of the subdivisions serving as an opening for vituperation instead of praise"; see also Agosti 2001, 237.

308 Agosti 2001, 224.

309 Although Agosti 2001, 244 (especially n. 133) is not so sure this is not a sarcastic joke, since obesity was normally associated with obtuseness.

310 Nonnus also exploits the superiority of the air element versus the water element, especially in 134–136: σὸς πάις ἔλλαχε πόντον, ἐμὸς τόκος αἰθέρα ναίειν / ἵξεται εἰς Διὸς οἶκον ὑπέρτερον· οὐ γὰρ ἐίσκω / οὐράνιον Διόνυσον ὑποβρυχίῳ Μελικέρτῃ, "Your son had the sea by fate, while mine will go to live in heaven, in the sublime dwelling of Zeus; no, I cannot compare celestial Dionysus to Melicertes of the abyss".

311 In *Dion.* 2.620 Zeus prompts Typhoeus; in 11.86 Ampelus prompts Selene.

312 Coripp. *Laud. Iust.* 380–9.

> Let no barbarian, freeing himself from the yoke-strap that passes under his neck, dare to fix his gaze on our King, the mighty warrior; nor let any weak Persian woman raise her veil and look straight at him, but, kneeling on the ground and bending the proud arch of her neck, let her come uncalled and submit to Roman justice.[313]

Nonnus' *agon* between Semele and Hera revolves around whose son is better, and Semele's argument is based on Dionysus having been born from his father Zeus directly, and nursed by Rea, Zeus' mother. Colluthus is possibly making a joke here by building a parallel between Dionysus and Athena: while in Nonnus to be born from the father (Zeus in both cases) represents the unique factor that grants superiority to the god, in Colluthus (181–3) parthenogenesis is the reason why Aphrodite mocks Athena and considers her inferior. Moreover, Dionysus is born from Zeus' thigh, while Athena is born from Zeus' head.[314] A further factor to be considered is the labour: in Nonnus, at 9.209–11 Semele says: Ζεὺς ἐμὸν υἷα λόχευσε καὶ ἀντ' ἐμέθεν πέλε μήτηρ, σπεῖρε πατὴρ καὶ ἔτικτε, τὸν ἤροσεν, αὐτοτόκῳ δὲ γαστρὶ νόθῃ τέκε παῖδα, φύσιν δ' ἤλλαξεν ἀνάγκῃ. "Zeus became mother in my place and delivered my son; he sewed him as a father and gave birth to the one he had sown. He gave birth to a child through a counterfeit womb of his own, and he forced nature to change": λόχευσε[315] (209) confirms the presence of labour pangs and childbirth, while in Colluthus, Aphrodite accuses Athena of having been born ἀλόχευτον (183).[316]

Aphrodite's first argument is in fact that Athena was not even delivered by a mother, through the natural process, but was carried by Zeus in his head and delivered by the axe of Hephaestus. To recount the birth of Athena, however, Colluthus chooses a metaphor of the fertility of the earth (ἔσπειρε,[317] ῥίζα and ἀνεβλάστησε 181–3), which contrasts ironically with the supernatural birth of Athena,[318] especially with the image of the root of iron (ῥίζα σιδήρου 182)

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313 Trans. W.R. Paton.

314 The birth of both gods from Zeus is evoked in Nonnus' powerful proem to the *Dionysiaca* (1.1–10), for which see Shorrock 2008, 101.

315 In *h.Merc.* 230 applied to Zeus; in Eur. *Ba.* 3 to Dionysus, while in Nonnus it is used many times metaphorically (*Dion.* 7.84, 27.50, 31.23, 38.246, 280, 47.86), especially 26.274 where it describes a pig giving birth to fish-like creatures: the event occurs just after Arrhetus' wedding and his bride, Laobie, gave birth to equally silent creatures, to which later Dionysus will give the gift of speech.

316 See also the attacks addressed by Hera to Artemis in Nonn. *Dion.* 36.49–77, and by Artemis to Aura in 48.749–85.

317 Not a hapax, as noted by Giangrande 1969, 152.

318 Kotseleni 1990, 221.

through which Athena was delivered.[319] The verb σπείρω chosen by Colluthus continues to echo Nonn. *Dion.* 9.229, where Hera generates Hephaestus ἄσπορος, and also *Par.* 19.152, where Jesus is ἄσπορος υἱός. Ἀναβλαστάνω, which normally refers to the blossoming of plants (as in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 1.1131), also occurs about the birth of the first monsters from the earth in *Arg.* 4.676 and of the terrible soldiers born from the earth in Nonn. *Dion.* 14.26.

The actual accusation of not being delivered by a mother, οὐ μαιώσατο μήτηρ (181), echoes two particular passages from the *Dionysiaca*[320] related to parthenogenesis: again 9.228, where Hephaestus is ἀπάτωρ, and 25.487, where Gaia self-reproduces and gives birth to the giant Damasenus. Ἀλόχευτον (183) expresses the process of self-reproduction typical of divinities; the word does not appear in Homer, but Nonnus employs it in the *Dionysiaca* on a couple of occasions:[321] unsurprisingly, in the invective of Semele against Hera (*Dion.* 9.217), where Semele acknowledges that Maia delivered Hermes, but makes a point that the child was certainly not delivered by her groom (like her Dionysus): οὐκ ἐλόχευσεν ἀκοίτης. In 8.27 the adjective is applied to Dionysus: πάις δ᾽ ἀλόχευτος ἐχέφρων ἅλμασιν ἐνδομύχοισι συνεσκίρτησε τεκούσῃ, "the child not born yet, but already conscious, danced together with his mother, jumping in her womb". Nonnus[322] describes the birth of Athena in similar terms in *Dion.* 20.54: αὐτοτελῆ γονόεντος ἀμήτορα παῖδα καρήνου, "the motherless daughter born by herself from the delivering head of her father".

Colluthus may also recall two passages of the *Dionysiaca* that seem to combine Platonic motifs[323] with the story told in Genesis 1.26. In 41.51–8 Nature,

319 The two passages quoted by Livrea 1969, 155 as possible models do not shed much light: Nonn. *Dion.* 41.65–6 speaks of the birth of Erechtheus, and Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 4.1641–2 of the birth of Talus, a giant given by Zeus to Europa to guard the island.

320 In *Dion.* 4.437 the expression is used about one of the soldiers born from the ground, attacking Cadmus.

321 *Dion.* 24.269 Eros looks at the sterile cosmos as Aphrodite has turned to Athena's handloom: παπταίνων ἀλόχευτον ἀνήροτον αὔλακα κόσμου, "he peered at the furrows of the world fallen out of love, sterile".

322 Gigli-Piccardi 2003, 576 notes how the motif echoes Luke's Gospel (*Ev. Luc.* 1.41: ἐσκίρτησεν τὸ βρέφος ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ αὐτῆς) where John jumps in Elisabeth's womb as Mary walks in. However, the image of a god who manifests divine powers before his birth was already in Call. *h.* 4.86–99 and 162–95 (prophecy of Apollo pronounced in Leto's womb) and in Plut. *Isid.* 12.356 where the two gods commence their love before their birth.

323 The two passages echo the tale of the earth-born who begin to reappear after the destruction caused by the abandonment of the cosmos by the god of government in Pl. *Pol.* 271ac and the genesis of the mortals by the hands of Epimetheus in Pl. *Prot.* 320d.

αὐτογένεθλος, ἀπάτωρ, ἀλόχευτος, ἀμήτηρ,[324] fashions the inhabitants of Berytus, the first city to have been founded in the cosmos, by combining earth, fire, air and water: ἐνθάδε φῶτες ἔναιον ὁμήλικες Ἠριγενείης, οὓς Φύσις αὐτογένεθλος ἀνυμφεύτῳ τινὶ θεσμῷ ἤροσε νόσφι γάμων, ἀπάτωρ, ἀλόχευτος, ἀμήτωρ, ὁππότε συμμιγέων ἀτόμων τετράζυγι δεσμῷ ὕδατι καὶ πυρόεντι πεφυρμένον ἠέρος ἀτμῷ σύζυγα μορφώσασα σοφὸν τόκον ἄσπορος ὠδὶς ἔμπνοον ἐψύχωσε γονὴν ἐγκύμονι πηλῷ, οἷς Φύσις εἶδος ὄπασσε τελεσφόρον· "here lived men coeval of the Dawn, whom self-reproducing Nature, following a chastity law, delivered, out of marriage, without a father, without childbirth, without a mother, when, in the atomic fusion of a quadruple bond, combining water together with the blazing steam of the air, the inseminated birth fashioned a wise fruit, breathing the breath of life on the pregnant mud". The birth of the habitants of Berito echoes the genesis that follows the flood in 7.4–6, where Nature fashions men, mixing together the four elements: καὶ φύσις ἐρρίζωτο, τιθηνήτειρα γενέθλης, καὶ χθονὶ πῦρ κεράσασα καὶ ἠέρι σύμπλοκον ὕδωρ ἀνδρομέην μόρφωσε γονὴν τετράζυγι δεσμῷ, "and Nature, nurse of the generative principle, put roots down; mixing fire with earth and water with air she shaped the human race with this quadruple bond". There are a number of connections between these passages and Colluthus: we find once again the concept of roots (Nonn. 7.4 ἐρρίζωτο—Coll. 182 ῥίζα), which echoes ancient philosophical terms such as ῥιζώματα;[325] this detail adds solemnity to the scene.[326] Moreover, the concept of bond (Nonn. τετράζυγι δεσμῷ 41.54 and 7.6—Coll. 157 μελίφρονα δεσμὸν ἐρώτων) may allude back to the universal bond described by Plato.[327]

324 An almost identical line occurs in Greg. Naz. *Carm.* 2.2.7.254 (PG 37. 1571): αὐτοπάτωρ, ἀλόχευτος, ἀμήτωρ ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνος. For a comprehensive discussion on descriptions of divinity by means of multiple adjectives, starting from the so-called *Theosophia Tubingensis*, see Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 182–6.

325 Emp. fr. 7 (6).1 Wright τέσσαρα γὰρ πάντων ῥιζώματα πρῶτον ἄκουε and Pythagoras in Porph. *VPyth.* 20 οὔ, μὰ τὸν ἁμετέρᾳ γενεᾷ παραδόντα τετρακτύν, παγὰν ἀενάου φύσιος ῥιζώματ' ἔχουσαν.

326 Gigli-Piccardi 2003, 525.

327 Pl. *Tim.* 32c καὶ διὰ ταῦτα ἔκ τε δὴ τούτων τοιούτων καὶ τὸν ἀριθμὸν τεττάρων τὸ τοῦ κόσμου σῶμα ἐγεννήθη δι'ἀναλογίας ὁμολογῆσαν, φιλίαν τε ἔσχεν ἐκ τούτων, ὥστε εἰς ταὐτὸν αὑτῷ συνελθὸν ἄλυτον ὑπό του ἄλλου πλὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ συνδήσαντος γενέσθαι. Τῶν δὲ δὴ τεττάρων ἓν ὅλον ἕκαστον εἴληφεν ἡ τοῦ κόσμου σύστασις. ἐκ γὰρ πυρὸς παντὸς ὕδατός τε καὶ ἀέρος καὶ γῆς συνέστησεν αὐτὸν ὁ συνιστάς, μέρος οὐδὲν οὐδενὸς οὐδὲ δύναμιν ἔξωθεν ὑπολιπών, "and out of these materials, such in kind and four in number, the body of the Cosmos was harmonised by proportion and brought into existence. These conditions secured for it Amity, so that being united in identity with itself it became indissoluble by any agent other than Him who had bound it together. Now of the four elements the construction of the Cosmos

The concept of a god who brings himself forth, and who therefore is his own father and son, in an endless cycle, dates back to Euripides: in a fragment we read ἀκάμας τε χρόνος … τίκτων αὐτὸς ἑαυτόν,[328] and in another αὐτοφυᾶ. In the third century BC, Chrysippus says ἅπαντά τ' ἐστὶν αἰθήρ, ὁ αὐτὸς ὢν καὶ πατὴρ καὶ υἱός.[329] The image represents an Egyptian concept[330] testified to for Osiris and Ptah, but is also found with regard to Zeus begetting Dionysus who is identical to Zeus,[331] and referred to Zeus himself in Aelius Aristides: ἐποίησε δὲ πρῶτος αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν … αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐξ αὑτοῦ ἐποίησε.[332] Similar terminology appears in a magical inscription from Antinoupolis: δεῦρο μοι ὁ αὐτογεννήτωρ θεέ, and αὐτὸς πάτωρ, αὐτομήτωρ[333] and in Gnostic-Hermetic texts[334] such as Firm. Mat. *Math.* 5.3: *Quicumque es deus qui per dies singulos caeli cursum celeri festinatione continuas … tu tibi pater ac filius uno vinculo necessitudinis obligatus, tibi supplices manus tendimus*. In later literature it relates to Christ, such as in Synesius: Πατέρων πάντων πάτερ αὐτοπάτωρ, προπάτωρ ἀπάτωρ, υἱὲ σεαυτοῦ, and Didymus Ἀθάνατος δὲ Θεὸς, … αὐτογένεθλος, τίκτων αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν, ἀεὶ νέος, οὐ ποιητός, and αὐτολόχευτος γίνεται, ἐξ ἕθεν αὐτὸς ἐὼν γενέτης τε καὶ υἱός.[335]

Unsurprisingly, Colluthus ironically twists the way self-reproduction is treated: while Nonnus uses ἀλόχευτος to define Nature as self-reproducing, but also, again, Christ (in *Par*. 19.145),[336] Colluthus uses it to humiliate Athena, implying that to be born through the alternative process is not something to be

had taken up the whole of every one. For its Constructor had constructed it of all the fire and water and air and earth that existed, leaving over, outside it, no single particle or potency of any one of these elements" (trans. W.R.M. Lamb).

328 Fragment by Euripides or Critias II, 88 B 18 D.-K. = Eur. fr. Fr. 594 Nauck.

329 *Frag*. 1078.

330 Versnel 1990, 227–9.

331 Firm. Mat. *Err.* 26.1, Clem. *Protr*. 2.14 and Arnob. *Adv. Nat*. 5.21.

332 Ael. Arist. *Εἰς Δία* (*Or*. 43) 8.

333 Crisi 1974, 119–24. For other similar inscriptions see Versnel 1990, 227 n. 109.

334 Whittaker 1980, 176–93.

335 Syn. *Hymn*. 1.145–8; Did. *Trin*. 3.2.2 (39, 788–92 Migne).

336 In Nonnus, ἀλόχευτος gains allegorical meanings that exploit its full semantic potential arising from Biblical texts and applied to Christ; this comes from a well-documented tradition of enhancing the semantic possibilities of words (traditionally Homeric vocabulary) to make them work in Christian contexts. As explained by Agosti 2005, the terminology originating from the Biblical exegesis can be also applied to late-antique poetry: la "scrittura infinita" (i.e. the text that grows with its readers to acquire multiple meanings and values) becomes polysemic and inexhaustible. Shorrock 2008 and 2011 highlight how the *Paraphrasis* and *Dionysiaca* share some terminology to define both Dionysus and Christ.

proud of; in fact, according to Aphrodite, Athena has nothing to boast about: οἷα δὲ κυδιάεις ἀνεμώλιος, Ἀτρυτώνη (180).

Aphrodite's second accusation against Athena is of despising love: she covers herself in bronze robes, avoids love and seeks wars (184–5).

Colluthus' model is Hes. *Op.* 198 λευκοῖσιν φάρεσσι καλυψαμένω χρόα καλὸν where Aidos and Nemesis wrap their beautiful bodies in white robes and leave the mortals to join the Olympus.[337] Lines 185–6 reflect the structure of lines 176–9. Here the first two hemistychia correspond to each other (φεύγεις φιλότητα + ἁρμονίης ἀδίδακτος, and Ἄρεος ἔργα διώκεις + ὁμοφροσύνης ἀδαήμων): Athena's contempt for love is justified by her lack of experience in harmony, and her passion for wars by her lack of concord. The line is modelled on Hector and Achilles' chase in *Il.* 22.157–8 τῇ ῥα παραδραμέτην φεύγων ὃ δ' ὄπισθε διώκων· / πρόσθε μὲν ἐσθλὸς ἔφευγε, δίωκε δέ μιν μέγ' ἀμείνων, "over there the two of them ran, the one running away, the other chasing him; one, strong, ran ahead, and a much stronger one chased him".

Next, Aphrodite humiliates Athena for her lack of expertise in matters of marriage, challenging the goddess on femininity. Colluthus had already described Athena at 33 as γάμων ἀδίδακτος when the goddess had reluctantly attended the wedding of Thetis and Peleus. Now Aphrodite humiliates her by accusing her of ignoring harmony and concord. The goddess is not simply laughing at the fact that Athena never married; she is insulting Athena deeply, accusing her of missing the crucial value that makes a relationship. In *Od.* 6.181 Odysseus wishes that the gods may grant Nausicaa ὁμοφροσύνην ἐσθλήν, together with a husband and a home. Athena is unable to comprehend another human being, to share feelings, ideas or any other experience with anyone else. The attack aims at ridiculing Athena's isolation and incapability to relate to others: she was born without a mother; she seeks battles (thus attacking others rather than loving them); she never experiences the beauty of being like-minded.

Colluthus' model for this line is *Od.* 15.196–8, where Telemachus tells Peisistratus that, by virtue of their fathers' friendship, they will share even more oneness of heart: from this passage Colluthus borrows φιλότητος (Coll. 185) and μᾶλλον (Coll. 187). With γάμων ἀδίδακτος, however, Colluthus may also be echoing Nonnus, who describes Athena in the same way in *Dion.* 2.210, and as πόθων ἀδίδακτος in 29.335. The expression is also employed by his contemporary Musaeus (*Her.* 32), where it is used as a compliment to Hero. In the other

337 A similar image is in Quint. Sm. 3.586, where the Nereids hurry to the Argive men: δὲ κυανέοισι καλυψάμεναι χρόα πέπλοις.

favourite model, Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina*, Pluto badly tolerates his ignorance of wedlock (*impatiens nescire torum* 1.35) and Ceres interrogates the goddesses, *expertes thalami* (3.279).

The last part of Aphrodite's invective is a powerful rhetorical question in which the goddess ironically asks whether Athena knows that women like her, who exult in glorious wars, are much more powerless, and that their sex is not clear when one has a close look at their bodies. The beginning of the line (ἀγνώσσεις, ὅτι μᾶλλον ἀνάλκιδές εἰσιν Ἀθῆναι τοῖαι 187–8) clearly echoes Mus. 249 ἀγνώσσεις, ὅτι Κύπρις ἀπόσπορός ἐστι θαλάσσης; / καὶ κρατέει πόντοιο καὶ ἡμετέρων ὀδυνάων, "do you not know that Cypris was born from the sea, and on the sea and on our pain she reigns?" The reference to Musaeus' line compels one to make a connection with Aphrodite's origin (her birth from the sea). Here, an educated reader can hardly fail to notice the obvious witticism. In Colluthus, Aphrodite ridicules Athena as she was not born through standard childbirth (181–3), and Colluthus achieves that by re-using the words that were used in Musaeus to highlight how Aphrodite herself, instead, was born from the sea, i.e. also not through standard childbirth. Her invective then, far from losing effectiveness despite its illogical grounds, triggers an ironic smile in the reader, who may wonder why Athena, normally so warlike, does not respond to such a groundless insult, a behaviour that fits in with the tendency, in late-antique epic speeches, to minimise interchange in dialogues.[338]

Aphrodite's final blow alludes to the gender ambiguity of women like Athena, who love battle and guard their virginity: when one looks close, it is not possible to clearly establish their sex (184–9). Coming from Aphrodite, the epitome of femininity, this insult could not be more humiliating for Athena. These words may remind readers of the abusive address endured by Artemis in Nonn. *Dion*. 48.361–9, where Aura ridicules the goddess' womanly body while flaunting her boyish figure.[339]

At 189, Colluthus uses κεκριμένων μελέων, borrowed from Nonnus, whose context was completely different: in *Par*. 19.188 St John reports that, when the soldier went to break the legs of the three crucified men to accelerate their

338 Speeches become fewer and longer in imperial and late-antique epic texts, but answers to the first speaker are rarely present, leading to the obvious progressive transformation of such dialogues into monologues (Cameron 1970a, 266–8).

339 Hadjittofi 2008 interprets this rape scene as an expression of the contemporary conflict, within Christian schools of thought, over the role of women: on the one hand, women who embraced their role of wives and mothers (exemplified by Artemis' womanly body); on the other hand, women who rejected all of the roles connected to their sexuality (exemplified by Aura's boyish and androgynous figure).

death, and he established that Jesus had already died on the cross, he pierced His chest with a sword. Blood and water came out; these things, John says, happened so that the holy writ that said "Not a bone of his will be broken"[340] would be fulfilled. The prophecy also said: "They will look at the one whom they had pierced".[341] In Nonnus, κεκριμένων μελέων τετριμμένον ὀστέον ἔσται alludes to the limbs of Jesus being examined to verify that actually none of his bones had been broken, as in the Easter lamb mentioned in Exodus. Jesus on the cross becomes the new Easter lamb, who carries manhood from the slavery of sin and death to the freedom of the new life of the sons of God. No bone of His will be broken, so as to preserve His purity intact. In Colluthus, the choice of such a symbolic expression inevitably connected with the current beliefs, contrasts with the mythological content of the scene: in Nonnus, Christ was the one under scrutiny, while in Colluthus it is Athena's followers. However, The poet returns to the topic in 301–4, where Paris says to Helen:

> οἶσθα γάρ, ὡς Μενέλαος ἀνάλκιδός ἐστι γενέθλης·
> οὐ τοῖαι γεγάασιν ἐν Ἀργείοισι γυναῖκες,
> καὶ γὰρ ἀκιδνοτέροισιν ἀεξόμεναι μελέεσσιν
> ἀνδρῶν εἶδος ἔχουσι, νόθοι δ' ἐγένοντο γυναῖκες.
>
> For you know that Menelaus comes from a feeble race.
> Women born among the Argives are not like you:
> for although they grow with weaker limbs,
> they look like men, and are just counterfeit women.

Notice the reoccurring concepts: ἀγνώσσεις and ἀνάλκιδες 187 corresponds to οἶσθα and ἀνάλκιδος 301, μελέων 189 to μελέεσσιν 303, ἄρσενες and γυναῖκες 189 to ἀνδρῶν and γυναῖκες 304. For this passage, obscure and much debated, Colluthus may have had in mind *Od.* 8.169–70, where Odysseus, responding to Euryalus who had accused him of not being a proper athlete, says ἄλλος μὲν γὰρ εἶδος ἀκιδνότερος πέλει ἀνήρ, / ἀλλὰ θεὸς μορφὴν ἔπεσι στέφει, "one may be inferior in looks, but a god crowns his speech with beauty".[342]

The portrait of Athena that emerges from the epyllion is largely filtered through Aphrodite's subjective eye; the goddess humiliates Athena for the circumstances of her birth, her masculine clothes, her contempt for love and her

340 *Ex.* 2.10.46; *Num.* 9,12; *Psalm* 34,21.
341 Zacc. 12.10.
342 In Chapter 3 I argue a possible allusion to this line also in Coll. 279.

lack of femininity. Athena had been introduced at Peleus and Thetis' wedding as helmetless (32) and γάμων ἀδίδακτος (33), and now Aphrodite ridicules her in the lowest possible way, questioning her gender, while she herself shows off her breasts and wins the prize for being the most beautiful goddess. Visually, on the one hand we have Aphrodite's bare chest (155–6), and on the other Athena covered in a bronze breast-plate (184). Athena's unattractiveness provokes disgust, which is exploited by Aphrodite in her speech. Claudian's portrait of Athena in *Rapt.* 2.21–35 may have been a model to Colluthus: here, the goddess wears a helmet and a spear (which she later removes at 144–5), but she wears a Cretan tunic which flows in the breeze, she shows her bare arms, and her overall appearance is gentler (*lenis* 27) than her brother Apollo, from whom she was different only in gender (*solusque dabat discrimina sexus* 29). Colluthus twisted Claudian's reference to sex to his means in order to support Aphrodite's invective.

However, Colluthus may have meant to play with the scene on another level: Athena's unconcern with grooming may already have been known to readers, in which case Aphrodite's invective would be doubly effective. Readers may also have remembered Athena's lack of interest in love in *h.Aphr.* 8–10, where the goddess is more interested in martial business: κούρην τ' αἰγιόχοιο Διὸς γλαυκῶπιν Ἀθήνην· / οὐ γάρ οἱ εὔαδεν ἔργα πολυχρύσου Ἀφροδίτης, / ἀλλ' ἄρα οἱ πόλεμοί τε ἅδον καὶ ἔργον Ἄρηος, / ὑσμῖναί τε μάχαι τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ ἔργ' ἀλεγύνειν, "the daughter of Zeus who holds the aegis, blue-eyed Athena, for she dislikes the works of all-golden Aphrodite, but she is pleased by war and the works of Ares, and by fights and battles and looking after beautiful crafts". Readers may also have remembered Athena as described in Call. *h.* 5.13–20, where the goddess does not require perfumes, oils or a mirror[343] (nor did Hera, in contrast with Aphrodite, who looked at herself in the mirror and fixed the same lock of hair twice in 21–2). Callimachus also spoke of Athena's birth from Zeus' head in *h.* 5.134 μάτηρ δ' οὔτις ἔτικτε θεάν, and in *Aet.* fr. 37 Ἡφαίστου λόχιον θηξαμένο̣υ πέλεκυν βρέγμ̣ατος ἐκ δίο̣ιο σὺν ἔντεσιν ἥλαο πατρός, "when Hephaestus sharpened his obstetrical axe, you sprang out armed from your father's bright forehead", echoing Aesch. *Eum.* 736–8 μήτηρ γὰρ οὔτις ἐστὶν ἥ μ' ἐγείνατο, / τὸ δ' ἄρσεν αἰνῶ πάντα, πλὴν γάμου τυχεῖν, / ἅπαντι θυμῶι, κάρτα δ' εἰμὶ τοῦ πατρός, "For there was no mother who gave me birth; and in all things, except for marriage, wholeheartedly I support the male and I am entirely on the father's side".

343 Although Callimachus does justify this with ἀεὶ καλὸν ὄμμα τὸ τήνας (*h.* 5.17), "her face is always beautiful".

Aphrodite's speeches before, during and after the contest actually mirror each other and are built with a rhetorically precise network of cross-references.[344]

For both Hera and Athena, Aphrodite firstly expresses her concerns about the rivals' powers and reputation while she talks to the Loves. Secondly, when she is seeking to persuade Paris to give her the prize, she makes a counteroffer which contrasts clearly with those of Hera and Athena. Finally, in her post-victory speech, she mocks both goddesses once again by undermining their role, power and origin.

Aphrodite's argument is directed not only at Paris but also at the reader, and is strategically orchestrated from the very beginning, when, pretending to be hopeless in front of the other two powerful goddesses, she gathers the Loves and makes herself strong after realising that her resources are not any less powerful. The reader then becomes knowledgeable about Aphrodite's weapons[345] before Paris and, at the time of the contest, is in a better position than Paris to make a decision. In addition, when the time of judging comes, the reader expects her to win.

The goddess' argument plays on dismantling her rivals' reputation and undermining the value of their offers. Reputation plays an important role in Aphrodite's strategic speech: she does not acknowledge or state Hera's and Athena's role and status (the former as the nurse of Graces and holder of sovereignty, the latter as the queen of battles), but reports their reputation as overheard second-hand information: she says φασί for Hera twice (90 and 174), καλέουσιν for Athena (91). After her victory, Aphrodite exploits her chance to demonstrate how she was in fact right to implicitly question Hera's and Athena's role: Hera, the mother of Ares, who was said to have given birth to the Graces, cannot take pride in her role as queen or mother today, as none of her children have come to rescue her. As for Athena, she cannot boast about being the queen of battles either, as she has also lost to Aphrodite's more effective weapons (94–8). Similarly, Aphrodite boasts of her victory to Ares after Morrheus' military defeat in front of Chalcomedea's beauty in Nonn. *Dion.* 35.160–85.

When it is time to persuade Paris to crown her as the winner, it is all about the reward that each goddess is promising. Aphrodite begins her plea by

344 Similarly, Nonnus had built a tight net of references in his proem (*Dion.* 1.11–33), demonstrating his virtuosity in mimicking and especially expanding his model (*Od.* 4.435–59): Homer described Proteus' six metamorphoses in 3 lines, while Nonnus dedicated 3 lines to each transformation; see Shorrock 2008, 102–3.

345 All three of them: the girdle, the goad and the bow (96). Livrea 1968a, 114 thought it was unlikely that the goddess listed three different weapons (for conjectures on this passage, see Williams 2001, 180).

addressing Paris with a smile (159)—the same smile that she had reserved for her fellow goddesses in Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 3.51—except, this time, ironically, she is addressing a μηλοβοτῆρα. When it is time to speak to Athena, instead, she insults her (189).[346] Aphrodite plays the extra card of showing her naked breasts, while Hera and Athena restrict themselves to a speech. The goddess makes a brief speech which mirrors those of her two rivals. Like them, she undermines the others' rewards as worthless: ἐπιλήθεο 160 and κάλλιπε 161 echo Athena's request to forget Hera and hold in no honour Aphrodite (ἐάσας 139 and ἀτιμήσας 140), and Hera's request to ignore the works of war (ἔργα μόθων ἀθέριζε 150). Curiously, Hera does not refer to Aphrodite in her speech.

The three speeches are linked to one another through ring composition as each contains an element which is then also dealt with in the next speech: Athena, the first to speak, promises Paris that vindictive Enyo will never press down on him (144), and Hera responds by saying that the slaves of Enyo fall into an early grave (153); Hera requests Paris to ignore the works of war (ἔργα μόθων ἀθέριζε 150), and Aphrodite distances herself altogether from wars (ἔργα μόθων οὐκ οἶδα 162); Athena had promised excellence in war (πολέμους 145), and Hera questions whether wars (πολέμων 150) belong in a king's world, and finally Aphrodite also invites Paris to forget about wars (πολέμων 160). Hera asks the rhetorical question τί γὰρ πολέμων βασιλῆι; (150), and Aphrodite responds with the rhetorical question τί γὰρ σακέων Ἀφροδίτῃ; (162).[347]

The episode of Morrheus and Chalcomedea in Nonn. *Dion*. 33–35, which, as seen above, serves as a model for Colluthus' passage on many levels, also has a circular structure, instrumental in framing the interventions of Aphrodite.[348] In the *Abduction*, too, it is Aphrodite who has the last word on her rivals' promises by countering word for word what they promise. After dismissing Hera's and Athena's offers, she makes the counteroffer of Helen to her rivals' rewards. Manly Athena (ἀντιάνειραν Ἀθήνην 171) had promised manly courage (ἠνορέης 141, ἠνορέην 145), while Aphrodite's alternative (ἀντὶ μὲν ἠνορέης 164) is a lovely bride. Regal Hera (κοιρανίην 90, 93 and 154) had promised Paris to make him ἡγήτορα (149) and κοίρανος (151): Aphrodite's alternative (ἀντὶ δὲ κοιρανίης 165) is Helen's bed. Hera had undermined Athena's ἠνορέη by saying

346 This is an example of *arte allusiva* to be enjoyed by an educated readership (Giangrande 1969, 152, and 1968, 531–3).

347 Based on Nonn. *Dion*. 24.303–4 Ἄρεϊ πέπλον ὕφαινε· νεοκλώστῳ δ' ἐνὶ πέπλῳ / ἀσπίδα μὴ ποίκιλλε· τί γὰρ σακέων Ἀφροδίτῃ; where Hermes reminds Aphrodite not to embroider shields on the cloak for Ares.

348 Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 339 on the structural role of ethopoiiai to act as links between scenes.

that its followers do not always excel (οὐκ αἰεὶ θεράποντες ἀριστεύουσιν Ἀθήνης 152), but Aphrodite again responds to her in kind that it is through beauty that women excel: ἀγλαΐῃ πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀριστεύουσι γυναῖκες (163).[349] As in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, Colluthus is expected to reject all possible allegations against the subject to extol, and he achieves this by making her *laudanda* respond to her enemies on each count: power, status, rewards.

Let us look closely at Athena's offer, ἠνορέη. In Nonnus, this is the virtue that Dionysus must demonstrate through his toils to produce evidence of his superiority and manhood. Often in the *Dionysiaca* the god is threatened by allegations of effeminacy,[350] and the poet promptly smoothes them out in 25.27–30:

> ἀλλὰ νέοισι καὶ ἀρχεγόνοισιν ἐρίζων
> εὐκαμάτους ἱδρῶτας ἀναστήσω Διονύσου,
> κρίνων ἠνορέην τεκέων Διός, ὄφρα νοήσω,
> τίς κάμε τοῖον ἀγῶνα, τίς εἴκελος ἔπλετο Βάκχῳ
>
> I challenge new and old poets in glorifying the sweaty toils of Dionysus; and if I compare the manhood of the children of Zeus, it is because I want to find out who achieved such a deed, who was like Bacchus.

It is interesting that Dionysus' virtue is now Athena's. What is more, if in Nonnus Dionysus had to demonstrate ἠνορέη to reject the charges of effeminacy against him, in Colluthus Athena is quite proud of her manliness and does anything within her power to reject femininity. Both divinities aspire to the same manliness, for different reasons, but ironically here it is a woman who rejects the main attribute of her gender. If for Athena excellence belonged to her followers, for Aphrodite it belongs to women.

The key to success is no longer prowess (ἠνορέη)[351] but beauty (ἀγλαΐη). Aphrodite is living proof of this as she is crowned the winner because she has devoted herself to beauty and openly acknowledges it (ἀγλαΐην ἐφίλησα, καὶ ἀγλαΐη με διώκει 173). We know this already from Colluthus' model Claudian, who, in *Gig.* 43–4, had stated that Venus had not brought darts or weapons, but beauty, which is her weapon: Κύπρις δ' οὔτε βέλος φέρεν, οὐχ ὅπλον ἀλλ'ἐκόμιζεν / ἀγλαΐην. Beauty shines through all of her speeches, and we can be in no doubt that the contest is indeed about beauty, not just status, reputation or

349 The direct model is Nonn. *Dion.* 40.27–8 ὁππόθι πολλαὶ / Χειροβίης πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀριστεύουσι γυναῖκες, see Orsini 1969, 16.

350 See n. 289 p. 113.

351 As Apollo clearly tells Aeneas in *Il.* 17.328–30.

achievements. At 87, Aphrodite had pondered σήμερον ἀγλαΐαι με διακρίνουσι προσώπων, "it is on beauty of face that I am judged today".[352] It is because she knows that beauty is what is tested that she bares her chest, knowing that there can be no more effective card to play and no better spectacle for Paris. Her beauty then becomes suddenly visible, tangible, accessible and undeniable, unlike the gifts that have been promised by Hera and Athena, both intangible and not immediately accessible. The goddess, standing there with her breasts on show, can very confidently urge the judge: δέχνυσο μορφὴν / ἡμετέρην (160–1). Just like her own beauty, her gift is tangible: she does not offer a skill or a value (like prowess or sovereignty) but a lovely bride (ἐρατὴν παράκοιτιν 164), who has a name, and the physicality of the whole scene climaxes in the next line with Aphrodite urging Paris to jump into bed with her (Ἑλένης ἐπιβήσεο λέκτρων 165). It is obvious, then, that the goddess is playing on the visual impact of her nudity on Paris, and offers to the speechless viewer a natural outlet for the desire she has spurred. Colluthus' words function as a prequel to Aphrodite's words to Helen in *Il.* 3.390–2, where the goddess, after snatching Paris away from the battlefield, urges Helen to join him in their bedchamber: δεῦρ' ἴθ'· Ἀλέξανδρός σε καλεῖ οἶκον δὲ νέεσθαι. / κεῖνος ὅ γ' ἐν θαλάμῳ καὶ δινωτοῖσι λέχεσσι / κάλλεΐ τε στίλβων καὶ εἵμασιν, "Come! Alexander tells you to return home: he is there in the bedchamber, on the splendid bed, radiant in his clothes and beauty".

Aphrodite's attack on Athena raises questions and can be seen as a debate regarding femininity and the skills required to be a woman. The rape of Aura in Nonn. *Dion.* 48 has been interpreted as a celebration of certain early Christian literature of female monks/martyrs, who rejected sexuality and motherhood in favour of a chaste existence.[353] Aura's fierce rejection of sexuality and motherhood reflects the late-antique literary tendency to deprive women of their productive role and thus turn them into males. With her androgynous and boyish body, Aura exemplifies this process of "masculinisation", in clear contrasts with the womanly body of Artemis, whom she insults at 361–9. With her curves, Artemis (the most anti-Christian pagan deity), paradoxically would seem to represent the more moderate and wider Christian literature that encouraged motherhood. The main accusation directed at Artemis by Aura focusses on the breasts (364–9): Artemis's are soft and womanly, and seem to spray milk, while

352 Paschalis 2008, 144 notes how, although the key beauty criterion across all the poem is face, Paris ends up choosing breast—another unexpected twist.

353 Hadjittofi 2008.

Aura has breasts that do not yield milk. Moreover, when Aura gives birth to the twins, she still refuses to breastfeed them, so much so that a panther will suckle her breasts, and Athena—the least motherly woman (she was untaught in matters of marriage in Coll. 33 and 186, and ἀντιάνειραν at 171, just as Aura, κούρην ἀντιάνειραν in 48.248),[354]—will end up nursing the newborns (but her breastmilk is impure at 955–7). Colluthus seems to be responding to Nonnus here: he presents an Aphrodite who, in contrast with Athena and Aura's manly figure, is extremely proud of her breasts, and he emphasises this by reiterating the goddess' lack of shame: οὐκ ᾐδέσσατο Κύπρις (156) and οὐκ ἐμνήσατο μαζῶν (158). By exaggerating Aphrodite's femininity through her appearance at the contest, bare-chested, and by presenting her specifically as a mother and a nurse (τιθήνην 89), accompanied by the Loves, before delivering her monologue ahead of the contest (85), Colluthus means to support the more widespread Christian views on motherhood, and thus to promote the woman who embraces sexuality and motherhood.

Readers have already been reminded of Jason's ambiguous heroism through an equally multifaceted Paris: now, the questions regarding the masculinity and the skills required to be a hero in the echoed models (Jason, Heracles, and Achilles) are re-addressed in the form of questions regarding the femininity of the goddesses. Jason's *amechanie* in Apollonius, just as Dionuysus' deficiencies in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, can be interpreted by readers in many ways, and the ambiguity of such characters is here once again posed by Colluthus, in an open debate on what it takes to be a woman.

As Williams notes, the motif of the superiority of physical beauty over weapons of war is particularly common in late epic.[355] We have seen how in Nonn. *Dion*. 35.21–40 an Indian who has just killed a beautiful Bassarid falls in love with her corpse. She arms herself with beauty (ἀγλαΐῃ κεκόρυστο 23); wounded, she wounds her enamoured killer (ἱμείροντα φονῆα οὔτασεν οὐτηθεῖσα 23–4); beauty becomes her weapon (βέλος δέ οἱ ἔπλετο μορφή 24), and while dying, she triumphs (φθιμένη νίκησε 25). The Indian eventually admits in 37–43:

354 Hadjittofi 2008, 124–31 discusses negative views on pregnancy as a disease, on lactation as dangerous and draining for women, on bans on all sexual activities, and in general on hostility towards procreation, all of which were promoted by religious orders of early Christianity, and are embodied by Aura.

355 Williams 2001, 182–3. According to Neoplatonism (Plot. *Enn*. 1.6.8.6–8), beauty was also superior to violence due to the ennobling power that spurs the memory of divine beauty in the lover, as discussed in Chapter 3.

> παρθενικὴ ῥοδόπηχυ, τεὸν δυσέρωτα φονῆα
> οὔτασας οὐταμένη, φθιμένη ζώοντα δαμάζεις,
> καὶ σὺ τεὸν βλεφάροισιν ὀιστεύεις ὀλετῆρα·
> ἔγχος ἐνικήθη σέο κάλλεϊ· σεῖο προσώπου
> μαρμαρυγαὶ κλονέουσιν, ὅσον γλωχῖνες ἀκόντων·
> στῆθος ἔχεις ἅτε τόξον, ἐπεὶ σέο μᾶλλον ὀιστῶν
> μαζοὶ ἀριστεύουσιν, ὀιστευτῆρες ἐρώτων.[356]
>
> Rose-armed girl, you, wounded, wounded your enamoured killer, and, while dead, you kill a living man; with your eyes you kill the one who has killed you. The spear is defeated by your beauty; the beauty of your face hurts as much as sharp swords. Your chest is like a bow, because your breasts, shooters of love, excel more than darts.

Nonnus' passage, which could represent an expansion on Triph. 33–9, where Achilles falls in love with Penthesilea (whom he had killed at Troy)[357] and gives her a funeral, shares some similarirites with Libanius' ethopoiia 12–13 Foerster,[358] featuring Achilles' speech at the sight of dead Penthesilea. The presence of this motif in the *Dionysiaca* is enlightening in many respects: firstly, it demonstrates that rhetorical exercises did not only belong to the school environment and did not only constitute scholastic material but could also be used as models for literary texts. Secondly, Nonnus' audacious divertissement was created precisely for the benefit of a public audience;[359] perhaps Colluthus' provoking topic had a similar aim, and thus could point at evidence that his text was read aloud in a public context.

Nonnus features the same topic once again in *Dion*. 42.234–7, where Pan teaches a fearful Dionysus:

> εἰπέ, τί σοὶ ῥέξει μία παρθένος; οὐ δόρυ πάλλει,
> οὐ ῥοδέῃ παλάμῃ τανύει βέλος· ἔγχεα κούρης
> ὀφθαλμοὶ γεγάασιν ἀκοντιστῆρες ἐρώτων,
> παρθενικῆς δὲ βέλεμνα ῥοδώπιδές εἰσι παρειαί

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356 The statement had been anticipated by Morrheus, who, in *Dion*. 34.323 says of Chalcomedea: καὶ μελίης πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀριστεύουσι παρειαί, a line that is echoed by Colluthus 163.

357 *Il*. 3.188–9, 6.186. Other sources of the myth include Lyc. *Alex*. 999–104 and Quint. Sm. 1. See Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 145–7.

358 Carvounis and Hunter 2008b, 7.

359 Agosti 2005a, 48.

> Speak: what is one girl alone going to do to you? She does not wield a spear; she does not throw a dart with her rosy hand: the girl's weapons are her eyes, shooters of love; her darts are her rosy cheeks.

Musaeus writes in a similar way (92–5):

> κάλλος γὰρ περίπυστον ἀμωμήτοιο γυναικὸς
> ὀξύτερον μερόπεσσι πέλει πτερόεντος ὀιστοῦ.
> ὀφθαλμὸς δ' ὁδός ἐστιν· ἀπ' ὀφθαλμοῖο βολάων
> κάλλος ὀλισθαίνει καὶ ἐπὶ φρένας ἀνδρὸς ὁδεύει.

> The clear beauty of a chaste woman reaches mortals sharper than a winged dart, and her eyes mark her route. Beauty slips out from her bright look and it opens up its way down to a man's heart.

Claudian's *Gigantomachy* 43–54 also features this theme in the already discussed portrait of beauty-armed Venus.[360]

When it comes to Hera, Aphrodite mocks her because none of her children (the Graces, Ares, and Hephaestus) have come to her help: the model for lines 175–9 is *Il.* 15.14–77. In Homer, Zeus blames Hera for the storms that are haunting Heracles, and he threatens to hang her from the sky again, as he did in the past when she was responsible for Poseidon persecuting Heracles' army returning from Troy. On that occasion, he had hung her up in the sky through a golden chain, with two anvils tied to her feet, and he had prevented any god from coming to her rescue. Nonnus re-elaborated the scene in *Dion.* 35.279–313, where Zeus is angry with Hera as she is persecuting Dionysus. He reminds her of the same episode quoted by Homer, once again with anvils and golden chain, adding that neither Ares nor Hephaestus could release her, and unless she nurses Dionysus back to health, he threatens to punish her in exactly the same manner, as well as to tie Ares up in chains and whip him as he, like Tantalus, walks around a wheel. The golden chain that was used to hang Hera up (*Il.* 15.19–20 δεσμὸν … χρύσεον ἄρρηκτον, Nonn. *Dion.* 35.292 χρυσέῳδεσμῷ) becomes in Colluthus Aphrodite's honeyed girdle of the Loves: μελίφρονα δεσμὸν ἐρώτων at 95 and 157.

360 Giomi 2003, 373.

This phase of Aphrodite's attack follows another standard feature of rhetorical forms such as ψόγοι and ethopoiiai:[361] the negative comparison. She lists all the qualities that her rivals do not have and points out how they have failed to demonstrate their status. The negative comparison is a stylistic device[362] used here to enhance the subject who is to be extolled (in this case, Aphrodite)[363] and shed some criticism over the addressee of the invective (Hera and Athena) by denying that this person acted as they were supposed to.[364] A long list of negatives (lines 175–89) describes Hera and Athena in a demeaning way that, in contrast, highlights Aphrodite's superiority:

> [...] ἀλλά σε πᾶσαι
> σήμερον **ἠρνήσαντο**, καὶ **οὐ** μίαν εὗρες ἀρωγόν.
> **οὐ** σακέων βασίλεια καὶ εἰ[365] πυρός ἐσσι τιθήνη·
> **οὔ** σοι Ἄρης ἐπάρηξε, καὶ εἰ δορὶ μαίνεται Ἄρης,
> **οὐ** φλόγες Ἡφαίστοιο, καὶ εἰ φλογὸς ἆσθμα λοχεύει
> [...] ἣν γάμος **οὐκ ἔσπειρε** καὶ **οὐ μαιώσατο** μήτηρ,
> ἀλλὰ σιδηρείη σε τομὴ καὶ ῥίζα σιδήρου
> πατρῴων **ἀλόχευτον** ἀνεβλάστησε καρήνων.
> οἷα δὲ χαλκείοισι **καλυψαμένη** χρόα πέπλοις
> καὶ **φεύγεις** φιλότητα καὶ Ἄρεος ἔργα διώκεις,
> ἁρμονίης **ἀδίδακτος**, ὁμοφροσύνης **ἀδαήμων**.
> **ἀγνώσσεις**, ὅτι μᾶλλον **ἀνάλκιδές** εἰσιν Ἀθῆναι
> τοῖαι, κυδαλίμοισιν ἀγαλλόμεναι πολέμοισι,
> κεκριμένων μελέων **οὔτ'** ἄρσενες **οὔτε** γυναῖκες;

361 For instance, see the sequence of negatives in a panegyric attributed to Libanius, *Pr.* 9.2.5 on Hector: ὁρῶν ταῦτα ἐκεῖνος οὐ παρῄνεσεν, οὐκ ἀπέτρεψε μὴ τολμᾶν, οὐκ ἔπεισεν, οὐκ ἠνάγκασεν, οὐδὲν οὔτε μικρὸν οὔτε μέγα ἐποίησε κωλύων τὴν ἀδικίαν. Libanius aims here at depriving Hector of any virtue and good deed through ἀνασκευή (refutation), for which also see Ael. Th. *Pr.* 111–2, Hermog. *Pr.* 11, Aphth. *Pr.* 10.8–19. For anaphora of the negative as a standard feature of ethopoiiai in Nonnus see Agosti 2005a, 48–50.

362 Davies 1987 and 1988.

363 Vian 1990, 25 n. 1.

364 Miguélez-Cavero, 36–9, and 2013, 324–5.

365 I prefer the reading of b, which reads καὶ εἰ instead of καὶ οὐ. (M, accepted by Livrea, Mair and Orsini). This version seems more plausible as the three lines would be built in a mirror-like fashion, and the first three hemistychia would correspond to three equally structured hemistychia in the second halves of the lines. Note the alliteration.

Description by negation is widely used in epic,[366] especially by Nonnus,[367] who also employs this technique in Semele's invective mentioned earlier (*Dion*. 9.212–29):

> ἤροσε μοῦνον Ἄρηα καὶ **οὐ** τεκνώσατο μηρῷ. [...] 213
> Λητὼ Φοῖβον ἔτικτε, καὶ **οὐκ ὤδινε** Κρονίων· 216
> Ἑρμείαν τέκε Μαῖα, καὶ **οὐκ ἐλόχευσεν** ἀκοίτης· [...] 217
> **οὐδὲ** τόκῳ Σεμέλης **ἀπάτωρ** Ἥφαιστος ἐρίζοι, 228
> **ἄσπορον** ἐκ γενετῆρος ὃν αὐτογόνος τέκεν Ἥρη 229

> Bacchus is better than Enyalios, for he only conceived your Ares, but did not deliver him from his thigh [...] Leto gave birth to Phoebus, the son of Cronus did not. Maia gave birth to Hermes: he was certainly not delivered by her groom [...] Not even Hephaestus, who is fatherless, could compete with Semele's son: he, to whom Hera gave birth by herself, without a father's seed.

In this case, Hera's children should have rescued her, but they did not;[368] thus, in Aphrodite's logic, Hera's is just a title. Colluthus refers closely to both the invective of Semele in book 9 of the *Dionysiaca* and the threat of Zeus to Hera in book 35: Colluthus 178 οὔ σοι Ἄρης ἐπάρηξε echoes Nonnus 35.290 οὐ πυρόεις Ἥφαιστος ἐπήρκεσεν where Colluthus' ἐπαράγω plays with Nonnus' ἐπαρκέω; Colluthus' 179 φλόγες Ἡφαίστοιο, καὶ εἰ φλογὸς ἆσθμα λοχεύει, "the flames of Hephaestus, even if he breathes fire" echoes Nonnus 35.290–1 πυρόεις Ἥφαιστος [...] οὐ δύναται γὰρ τλήμεναι αἰθαλόεντος ἕνα σπινθῆρα κεραυνοῦ, "fiery Hephaestus [...] for he cannot tolerate one single sparkle of the burning lightning". Also note the anaphora of οὐ in Coll. 176–9 as in Nonn. 35.290.

At 177, Aphrodite draws her conclusions from Hera's abandonment by the Graces, Ares and Hephaestus: she is not queen of shields although she is nurse of fire. As Livrea notes, each hemistychion of this line is developed, respectively, at lines 178 and 179: so that οὐ σακέων βασίλεια goes with οὔ σοι Ἄρης ἐπάρηξε, καὶ εἰ δορὶ μαίνεται Ἄρης, and οὐ πυρός ἐσσι τιθήνη with οὐ φλόγες Ἡφαίστοιο, καὶ εἰ φλογὸς ἆσθμα λοχεύει.[369] Curiously, this is the only instance in which the title is given to Hera. Colluthus calls Aphrodite βασίλεια at 28, 140 and 315, and at 16

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366 *Il*. 14.394–401, 17.20–3; Opp. *Cyn*. 2.138–46; Triph. 369–70. See also Theocr. *Id*. 3.47 and *AP* 7.227.1–2.

367 See also *Dion*. 10.322–5, 11.227–30, 23.221–4, 29.240–2, 38.196–21 (Agosti 2005a, 48–9).

368 For 176 εὗρες ἀρωγόν see [Apolin.] *Psalm*. 33.33.

369 Livrea 1968a, 153.

he actually calls her Χαρίτων βασίλειαν, in contrast with Hera who is defined Χαρίτων τιθήνην at 89, and whose role as the mother of the Graces is reiterated at 174–5; at 291 Paris calls Helen βασίλεια, and at 91 Athena is πολέμων βασίλειαν. The sentence sounds ironic in Aphrodite's mouth at the moment of her victory, as the goddess had already undermined the title at 162 by rhetorically asking τί γὰρ σακέων Ἀφροδίτῃ; earlier, Aphrodite had questioned the relevance of her role, and now she establishes that she does not even own that title, as Ares did not come to rescue, although he rages with his spear. In parallel, the goddess also deprives Hera of her title of nurse of fire, as Hephaestus did not show up either, although he breathes fire.

This is definitely Aphrodite's contest, and her invective elevates her victory to a triumph. But what effect does Aphrodite's invective achieve on readers? Her accusations are not completely true (for instance, Hera does not really lose her status simply because her children did not come to her help, nor is Athena's gender really up for debate although she preserves her virginity): they are a hyperbolic version of the truth. The aim of invective was not to establish a new truth but to mix fantasy with some facts in order to create an impression of untrustworthiness in the readers. Obviously, readers would be unconcerned with verifying the truthfulness of the facts presented, but they would be left with a sense that the *laudandus* is superior to his enemies,[370] an impression that would last until the next battle. Panegyrics were the normal instrument of propaganda in late antiquity, and—as Miguélez-Cavero notes—they could be approached with humour and in a rhetorical and literary fashion.[371] Colluthus succeeds at this: the invective is built so perfectly from a rhetorical perspective that its sharpness makes it stand out from the rest of the epyllion, and although we do not really think any less of Athena, the irony of Aphrodite's last rhetorical question cannot fail to still make us smile.

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370 Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 35 and 39.
371 Miguélez-Cavero 2010, 40.

CHAPTER 3

# Colluthus' Visual Epyllion

Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* reads as a series of picturesque scenes[1] with a strong visual impact. The poem's episodes, though chronologically organised, do not form a continuous sequence[2] that comprehensively covers the whole story. The poet rather seems to have chosen the episodes with the highest pictorial potential (as well as offering occasion to display his erudition by means of digressions and/or allusions to other episodes in previous literature) and to have devised them almost as vignettes. Using a standard convention widely employed in epic, the poet relies on his readers to make connections between scenes and to recall antefacts and consequences.[3]

Throughout the epyllion, ekphrastic elements make up a significant portion of the text. Colluthus elaborately describes locations and surroundings, and lingers on his characters' appearance and attire. He focusses on how characters interact through gestures, actions and speech, and on their impact on each other, the narrator and the readers. The visual impact also has a psychological influence on readers and leads their perception and evaluation, suggesting how they might read, and sometimes judge, an action or event. Helen, Paris, Aphrodite and Hermione are all described in a sort of three-dimensional way:[4] we are told how they look, how they behave, what they perceive and how their actions are affected by what they see and hear.

A second interpretive context for the *Abduction* is the dramatic tradition. Although the poem is a narrative text, Colluthus in many respects tells his story as if it were a performance; or more precisely, readers are made to feel as if they were reading a description of a play rather than a story. Readers open a book but, in a sense, end up going to the theatre, seeing a performance not with their own eyes but as reported through the narrator, through his descriptions and his comments.[5] Colluthus is in fact a remarkably overt and intrusive guide,

1 Giangrande 1969, 150: the stand-alone episodes are to be mentally connected with prior events, a technique well known to Theocritus. See also Alesso 2002, 23.

2 Livrea 1968a, xx.

3 Nünlist 2009, 157–67; Agosti 2005a, 46. For Triphiodorus, see Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 12–13; for Quintus, see Campbell 1981, 12.

4 Alesso 2002, 24.

5 Agosti 2006b, 352 highlights how in late antiquity written and recited word interacted as in a double performance, creating a new form of communication that touched readers/viewers synaesthetically.

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who constantly engages with his readers, breaks the fiction, reveals himself and operates on a metatextual level.

Finally, the occasion of Colluthus' poem may be explored. The *Abduction* presents features that are common in other contemporary genres destined to public declamation or performance, such as ethopoiiai, rhetorical exercises in general, and performative art forms such as pantomime. The sections of the epyllion neatly map the scenes of a pantomime, and the judgement of Paris and the abduction of Helen were popular themes for pantomimes. Various possibilities arise. Does the epyllion merely play with genre and mimic a pantomime?[6] Did it end up being publicly declaimed like some other short poems known to us, or was this the author's aim from the beginning? Does it simply represent yet another example of late-antique poetry in which literary taste, patterns and trends of the times merge into one single multifaceted creation that aims to please its contemporary educated audience?

## 1 Visuality in Literature

Scholars discussing visuality in a text may be referring to a number of different phenomena. One of these is ekphrasis, as well as the significance of viewing and looking within the text.[7] In addition, one may explore the repercussions of the viewer's gender and social context, or the emotional and ethical effects of the action of looking on the audience.

In ancient progymnasmata, the rhetorical exercises that were a key element of the educational curriculum, ekphrasis refers to any sort of vivid description.[8] Handbooks of rhetoric and ancient literary critical works elaborately illustrate how vividness is to be achieved in oratory and literature by exploiting

6 In a similar way to poems including ekphraseis, such as Asterius of Amasea's who attempted to compete with the painter of the martyrdom of St Euphemia (Agosti 2006b, 353). On this, see especially Webb 2007, who identified the role of mimesis between the textual and visual layers of the work, exposing the typically Byzantine focus on how art affected its spectators.

7 A recent work by Froma Zeitlin on Chariton's novel is a great example of the various levels of significance and function of ekphrasis, stretching beyond its classification as a figure of speech (Zeitlin 2013).

8 Ael. Th. *Pr.* 18 Ἔκφρασις ἐστὶ λόγος περιηγηματικὸς ἐναργῶς ὑπ᾽ὄψιν ἄγων τὸ δηλούμενον, "Ecphrasis is descriptive language, bringing what is portrayed clearly before the sight" (Kennedy 2003, 45). Definitions in other progymnasmata are very similar: see Hermog. 22 (Kennedy 2003, 86); Aphth. 36 Rabe (Kennedy 2003, 117); Nicol. *Pr.* 68 (Kennedy 2003, 166); Joann. Sard. *Comm. Aphth. Pr.* 215 Rabe (Kennedy 2003, 218). Zeitlin 2013 (especially 17–20); Elsner 2007, 20 n. 3; Webb 1999, 7–1, 15–18, and 2009b.

the power of the visual and the sensibility of the audience.[9] In antiquity, to the four standard types of ekphrasis (those of people, events, places and times), Theon added a new category for ekphraseis of *tropoi*; Hermogenes those of occasions; Aphthonius those of the animal and botanic world; and, in the fifth century AD, Nicolaus[10] added ekphraseis of statues and paintings (ἀγάλματα and εἰκόνες).[11] In modern scholarship, the term is used more narrowly for a description of a work of art, a sculpture or a painting,[12] either as a freestanding literary form, such as the many ekphrastic epigrams on Myron's statue of a cow in the *Greek Anthology*, Christodorus' *AP* 2 on the statues of the gymnasium of Zeuxippos in Constantinople, and Philostratus' descriptions of painting in the *Imagines*.[13] Ekphrastic digressions are also contained within narrative or dramatic texts, such as the description of Achilles' shield in *Iliad* 18.578–608 and that of Ariadne's embroidered cover in Catullus 64.50–264, or that of Dionysus' shield in Nonn. *Dion*. 25.380–562.

The reliability of these artistic ekphraseis has spurred much debate in scholarship: for instance, Mango argued that Byzantine literature, especially ekphrasis, is spoiled by a "fundamental dishonesty": Byzantine writers are so engrossed in their love for rhetorical language and topoi that they are not only unable to view the artworks, but they are also unable to see them without drawing on pre-existent codified models.[14] Christodorus, for instance, is unconcerned with describing the exact physical reality of the statues[15] and looks instead for the aspects that are not immediately perceptible to eyesight,

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9 Goldhill 2007, 3–15. Quintilian *Inst*. 6.2.29 and Longinus *Subl*. 15.9 in particular help in clarifying the meaning and interaction of *enargeia*, *phantasia* and persuasion.

10 Nicol. *Pr.* 69.4–11 Felten. See Tissoni 2000a, 47.

11 An interesting example of how word and art merged through visualisation is Christ. 288–290: in the description of Aphrodite's statue, the poet employs a rare word (κεχάλαστο) which had been used to describe the goddess looking at herself in the mirror in Ares' shield, on Jason's cloak in Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 1.742–6. Tissoni 2000a, 204 notes how Christodorus employs the rare word, which had been referred to armed Aphrodite in a fictitious object such as Jason's cloak, to describe a real statue.

12 Elsner 2007, 20; Webb 1999, 7–11, 15–18.

13 Prioux 2007, Goldhill 1996 and 2007.

14 Mango 1975.

15 According to Waltz 1928, 54 n. 4, Christodorus had certainly seen the statues that he was describing before the fire that, during the Nika riots in 532, destroyed the gymnasium: this would justify his frequent use of the imperfect. However, Tissoni 2000a, 57 and 21–22 disagrees and backdates the ekphrasis to around 503, on the basis that it is unlikely that the poet wrote the encomiastic *Isaurica* (celebrating Anastasius' victories against the Isaurians in 498) fourteen years after the emperor's death (518); another element in support of Tissoni's thesis is that Christodorus, unlike Procopius of Gaza, quotes Pompey as

making his ekphrasis, in the majority of the cases, actually an ethopoiia of the character which offers him a pretext to display his passion for erudition.[16]

In late antiquity, hunger for visuality (*scopophilia*)[17] dictated by the *spettacolarizzazione* of the civilisation, meant that written and performed word often interacted in many genres, such as Christian homilies, epideictic oratory and especially ekphrastic poetry.[18] The subjects of these works—in both verse and prose—were mostly artworks, being man-made, such as statues (Christodorus' ekphrasis of the statues of the gymnasium of Zeuxippos); paintings (John of Gaza's description of a cosmological painting in the baths of Gaza,[19] and Procopius of Gaza's ekphrasis of the complex collection of paintings of the myth of Phaedra and Hippolytus); buildings (as Procopius of Caesarea's treatise *de Aedificiis*, about the architectural achievements of Justinian);[20] cities; and later, churches (Choricius of Gaza' *Laudatio Marciani* which includes an ekphrasis of two churches with their decorative scheme) or natural spectacles.[21] Ekphrasis is also employed within longer works, such as in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*.[22] Later, the wonder moved on to Jesus' miracles and words,[23] and to descriptions of imaginary works.[24]

As one of late-antique poetry's basic rhetorical structures, ekphrasis (and the education that teaches description) affects the style and the framing of the content by carrying consequences such as attention to detail, a tendency to digression and juxtaposition of scenes (as in Colluthus)[25] in a synchrony

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an ancestor of Anastasius in his panegyric, like Priscian had done in 503 when his panegyric of the emperor was recited in public.

16 Tissoni 2000a, 54.

17 Winkler 1974.

18 Agosti 2006b, 352–53; Roberts 1989, 66–121.

19 Lauritzen 2011 and (more in general on ekphrasis in Gaza) 2005.

20 Although Procopius' aim was to write a panegyric of the emperor, not an ekphrastic account: he is not very interested in the aesthetic descriptions of churches, as much as he is on the curious details about them. For instance, his lack of flair for the visual shows in his failure to take the opportunity to describe Ravenna's beautiful churches and Hagia Sophia. See Cameron 1985, 231–33.

21 Like Phaeton admiring the cosmos in Nonn. *Dion.* 38.307–17, where the poet revives a Hellenistic topos (Agosti 2006b, 361), or Nonnus' description of Brongus' cave in *Dion.* 17.37–45.

22 Agosti 2014; Lauritzen 2012; Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 135–8.

23 In Nonn. *Par.* 4.251 (the miracle of the centurio's son), and 11.173 (Lazarus). For more examples see Agosti 2004, 812–813.

24 Eustathius Macrembolites' novel *Hysmine and Hysminias* (twelfth century AD) includes accounts of allegorical picture cycles.

25 Alesso 2002, 31.

that is unconcerned with chronological order, and the use of φαντασία as a means of helping the viewer to interpret with an intellectual gaze what the eye cannot see.[26] The poet often challenged the graphic artist to paint a better picture through his words: an example is offered by the ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia of Paul the Silentiary, a high functionary at the court of Justinian, which was recited in 563 in the presence of both the emperor and Constantinople's patriarch Eutychius.[27]

Recently, many studies have been devoted to describing the ways in which ekphrasis works and can be interpreted,[28] and to analysing in detail individual ekphrastic texts in various genres and their relationship with the works of art that they describe.[29] For example, these studies have focussed on how authors of ekphraseis competed with each other to describe artworks in the most original way (as in the case of the many poems dedicated to Myron's Cow) and on their aim of educating the viewer in how art should be interpreted, providing a sort of handbook.[30] Interpreted in this way, Christodorus' ekphrasis of the statues could be divided into epigrams that could have served as a vademecum for visitors of the Zeuxippos gymnasium. Being primarily a vivid description,

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26 Agosti 2006b, 352–56 notes how, for instance, Nonnus' digression in *Dion*. 25.380–562 on Dionysus' shield works as a poetic manifesto—in line with ekphrastic tradition, a virtuous demonstration of realism (ἐνάργεια), and an appeal to φαντασία, i.e. to the reader's imagination to see beyond and to perceive the hidden meaning of the described images (showing the destiny of the god).

27 Whitby 1985. The poem marks the first attempt to share a classical instrument (the hexameter) for both ecclesiastical and secular encomium (both the emperor and the patriarch are praised, although the latter had not contributed to the rebuilding of the church). In Paul, it is the pagan divinity of Rome who invites Justinian to rebuild Santa Sophia (a church as the symbol of his reign!), while a few years later the Christian element has already become predominant: in Corippus of Gaza (565 AD) it is the Christian Virgin who prompts Justin to assume the imperial throne.

28 Webb 2009b; Elsner 2002; Bartsch and Elsner 2007; Goldhill 2007, 1; Goldhill and Osborne 1994.

29 Some examples: on Homer, Bulloch 2006 and D'Acunto and Palmisciano 2009; on ekphrastic epigram, Prioux 2007 and Goldhill 2007; on Xenophon, Goldhill 1996 and 1998; Theocritus, Lamari 2008; on Catullus, Elsner 2007; on Moschus, Petrain 2006; on Ovid, Salzman-Mitchell 2005; on Virgil, Smith 2006; on the new Posidippus, Gutzwiller 2005 and Acosta-Hughes, Kosmetatou and Baumbach 204.

30 For Goldhill 2007, 18–19, ekphrastic epigrams aim to prepare a cultured citizen of the Empire and to enable him to play the game of competitive cultural performance. See also Agosti 2006b, 359–90.

ekphrasis aimed at provoking emotions in its readers,[31] for instance by insisting on the technical challenge that the artist had to overcome in order to achieve a particular effect, or by making the characters of the artwork provide an illustrative explanation of the represented scene.[32]

Beyond ekphrasis, a growing interest in the relationship between viewer and object (or person) viewed has recently led to a sharp rise in scholarly work on ancient authors' and audiences' perception of the gaze in rhetoric and literature. Such studies have not been limited to ekphrastic texts in the narrow (modern) sense but have focussed more broadly on works in which the action of "looking" plays an important role. Naturally, these include tragedy and comedy,[33] but also non-theatrical texts such as epic,[34] the novel[35] and even historiography.[36]

An important dimension of this type of textual visuality—including what is visible (body language, appearance) and the action of looking at something/someone—are emotions, social status, role and reputation. Constantinidou, for instance, analysed how heroes and gods look in Homer's work disclosing feelings such as rage or divine approval.[37] Cairns examined how "looking at" and "looking away" may express, in different contexts, confidence or inadequacy, as well as respect or disrespect for the other, ἔρος or envy.[38]

Approaches originating in film theory and feminist criticism have been applied to ancient texts[39] in an effort to better understand how the viewing perspective, and particularly the role of the viewing subject, may affect the interpretation of texts and possibly help in understanding the social and dynamic aspects of the culture in which they were produced, the author's point of view and message, and their effect on readers and audiences. Thus, for instance, Hawley read the duel of Eteocles and Polynices as a western movie,[40] where the fight is presented in absence of words and movement. These theories provide an interesting and fresh approach to ancient texts, sometimes offering persuasive new readings that take into account the power of the gaze.

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31 Tissoni 2000a, 51–53; Webb 2009b.

32 James-Webb 1991, 10–11.

33 With no claim to comprehensiveness: Hawley 1998; Fletcher 1999 (on Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*); Zeitlin 1994 (on Euripides).

34 Smith 2006; Salzman-Mitchell 2005; Becker 1995; Prier 1989.

35 Morales 2004, 130–43, 152–72, 199–220; Bartsch 1989; Fusillo 1989, 111–170 and 196–207.

36 Goldhill 2007, 5–6.

37 Constantinidou 1994.

38 Cairns 2005.

39 Liveley 2006; Hawley 1998, 83–4.

40 Hawley 1998, 96.

These interpretations frequently focus on the gender of the viewer and of the object viewed, where gender is not simply meant as the sexual gender, but also the mental or perceptive one, i.e. the viewing subject may be a woman (as in Erinna *AP* 6.352)[41] who is viewing the object through the eyes of a man, or as a male would view it.[42]

## 2 Colluthus' Visual Terminology

Colluthus employs a rich vocabulary of vision-related terms, from the verbs indicating different ways of "seeing" and "looking", each with more or less subtle nuances of meaning, to the nouns belonging to these semantic fields, such as those to signify the face, the look and the eyes.

Fundamental scholarship includes the works of Vendryes and Prévot, who provided detailed linguistic background on the relevant vocabulary, especially retrieving their Indo-European origin and explaining how the use has evolved from Homeric times onwards.[43] Thordarson focusses on how the vocabulary has been adopted by the different genres across time, justifying semantic choices by each author and demonstrating how linguistic evidence can be helpful in identifying the linguistic source of some texts.[44] Prier concentrates instead on the centrality of light in all its manifestations in archaic Greek language, in particular on the phenomenology of sight and appearance.[45] His stimulating approach is unusual and based on the interrelationship between what he defines as geometric projections between the "this" (the point of intention) and the "other" or "that" (the object viewed), the forces of both interacting in a Kraftfeld or field of forces.[46] Prier also examines the difference between δοκεῖν and φαίνεσθαι, which is not linguistically marked in English, French or German as it is in Greek, indicating on the one hand human activity,

41 Discussed by Goldhill 2007, 11.

42 Goldhill 2007, 9 and 11–15, against Skinner 2001, argues that no feminine ekphrastic tradition existed, and that, given especially that both female and male authors (and viewers) employ the same models, topics and terminology, one explanation may lie in education, which homogenised both sexes' views.

43 Vendryes 1932; Prévot 1935.

44 Thordarson 1971. For instance, based on the use of θεωρέω as a synonym of βλέπω (Thordarson 1971, 121–2), it is believed that the Gospel of St John was written in either Syria (Palestine) or Asia Minor.

45 Brennan and Jay 1996; Prier 1989.

46 Auerbach 2003, 1–19.

and on the other the process of phenomena appearing or being perceived.[47] Prier's observations on the direction and on the quality of the various types of viewing especially in Homer have shed some light on how I have interpreted some of the epyllion's episodes.

*Comparison of occurrences of verbs of seeing in Colluthus and previous epic poets*:

| **Homer** | **Apollonius** | **Nonnus' *Dion.* and *Par.*** | **Colluthus** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. εἶδον (480x) + | 1. παπταίνω: 12x | 1. δοκεύω: 78x | 1. εἶδον (9x) + |
| ὁράω: 116x | 2. δέρκομαι: 11x | 2. δέρκομαι: 71x | 2. ὁράω: (2x): 11x |
| 2. παπταίνω: 31x | 3. θηεύμαι: 8x | 3. ὀπιπεύω: 61x | 3. διακρίνω: 6x |
| 3. θηέομαι: 29x | 4. ὀπιπεύω, | 4. εἶδον: 51x | 4. παπταίνω: 5x |
| 4. δέρκομαι: 15x | διακρίνω: 4x | 5. παπταίνω: 43x | 5. θηέομαι: 3x |
| 5. διακρίνω: 14x | 5. δοκεύω: 3x | 6. διαμετρέω: 14x | 6. ἀνατέλλω: 3x |
| 6. δοκεύω: 7x | 6. ἀνατέλλω: 2x | 7. τανύω: 4x | 7. φράζομαι: 3x |
| 7. ὀπιπεύω: 6x | 7. Εἶδον: 1x | 8. διακρίνω: 3x | 8. δέρκομαι, |
| 8. διαμετρέω, | 8. βλέπω, ὁράω, | 9. θεάομαι: 2x | διαμετρέω, |
| ἀνατέλλω: 1x | διαμετρέω, τανύω | 10. ὁράω, βλέπω: 0x | ὀπιπεύω, |
| 9. τανύω ὄμμα: 0x | ὄμμα: 0x | | δοκεύω: 2x |
| 10. βλέπω: 0x | | | 9. τανύω ὄμμα: 1x |
| | | | 10. βλέπω: 0x |

Colluthus uses a wide range of verbs to describe the action of "seeing" and "looking": this variegated use is visible particularly in the passages where characters are occupied in the act of looking, like when Paris is judging the goddesses' beauty (132–36: 5 verbs), when he scans the landscape and buildings during his journey to Sparta (202–248: 9 verbs), during the waterspout episode (202–210), when Helen first meets Paris (254–316: 9 verbs), and when Hermione is looking for her mother (328–86: 6 verbs).

The use of different verbs and words marks a clear desire to display his erudition, creating an effect of "voyeuristic vision".[48] Colluthus uses specific words in specific situations, adhering to their precise meaning, and he tends to use certain verbs only for certain characters. For instance, he uses ὁράω in the

47 Prier 1989, 19–22.

48 A similar result is achieved by Nonnus in his story of Aura in *Dion.* 48 (Schmiel 1993).

present only on two occasions (340 and 381), both related to Hermione. Colluthus exploits all the different connotations of a word, using the same word on multiple occasions with different meanings, as noted by Ludwich and Livrea,[49] once again displaying his virtuosity, but also possibly forcing his reader to decide on the correct meaning each time, stimulating an interaction that will be examined in the last chapter of this work. Two good examples are ὀπωπή and εἶδος. 'Οπωπή (6x) means "face" in 130 and 273, while in 124, 259 and 305 it means "eye" or "gaze", and in 340 it means "eyes" with a more physical connotation, without reference to the "gaze" or "look" of Hermione. Εἶδος (3x) means "beauty" in 130, "icon" in 239, "look" or "appearance" in 304. Εἶδος is semantically linked to ἰδεῖν, the most used verb in Colluthus, and it designates a phenomenon originating from the viewed object/person,[50] therefore something that appears (φαίνεται) and whose trueness cannot be established.[51] It is not accidental that Colluthus chooses to define beauty with this word, given that we are dealing with a beauty contest, a circumstance in which the only beauty that is up for judgement is that of the exterior appearance. In Homer, the word signifies a god's gift to humans that is not necessarily associated with ethical qualities or virtues, as happens in Plato, but simply defines the quality of being pleasing to the eye,[52] and this is why it recurs often in attributes that add up to the good looks expressed by εἶδος. For instance, in *Od.* 4.263, Helen regrets abandoning Menelaus who lacked neither good looks (εἶδος) nor intelligence (φρένες). Colluthus plays a sort of inverse game by using, at 130, εἶδος ὀπωπῆς, i.e. specifying that the (only exterior) beauty that Paris should judge is that of the face, reiterating the concept that we are dealing with outer beauty only.

The passage at 304–5 is more intricate. Paris says to Helen that Argive women look masculine and thus they are only counterfeit women. Paris here expresses his expectation that women should also have the εἶδος of women, but in this case their appearance and their identity are mismatched. A similar gender discrepancy had also been blamed on Athena by Aphrodite earlier in 187–9, where the goddess questioned Athena's sex.

The table illustrating Colluthus' verbal choices and their contexts indicates that the poet favours three verbs in particular in their original significance: ὁράω, παπταίνω and δοκεύω. The other "seeing" verbs are used by our poet as

49 Ludwich 1901, 14; Livrea 1968a, 69.

50 Prier 1989, 101–8.

51 See also its connection with εἴδωλον, Prier 1989, 101–2.

52 Prier 1989, 104.

synonyms and do not carry the specific meaning that they originally had. For instance, δέρκομαι, a meaningful verb in Homer which originally designated a sharp, quick glance (typically of snakes) that generated terror or wonder (θάμβος) in the viewer,[53] is used by Colluthus with a generic meaning: at 134, Paris looks at the neck of the three goddesses, and at 214, he sees the tomb of Phyllis. The actions are not accompanied by any connotation of sharpness, rapidity, terror or wonder, and are directed at inanimate objects.

Colluthus embraces tradition by choosing the contexts in which he employs these verbs, with particular attention to the emotive connotations that apply to each situation.

The verb ὁράω (in the present and in its aorist εἶδον) is the most used in Homer for "to see", although it keeps its original meaning of "to pay attention to"[54] (its aspect dictates the durative and lengthy nature of the gaze), whereas εἶδον designates an occurrence and is often used in contexts of wonder.[55] Colluthus follows this choice, unlike Apollonius and especially Nonnus, who never uses the present. Colluthus also limits the use of ὁράω to only two occasions (340, 381), while extensively using εἶδον.

The use of ὁράω in Colluthus indicates, in all cases but one, a passive, unintentional viewing which belongs more to the world of perception than to that of conscious and intentional observation. This use is therefore in line with the system that had been in place since Homer and shows the influence of εἶδον on the present.[56]

53 Prier 1989, 29–31.

54 The verb, which originally signified an active and intentional meaning, close to that of "to guard" (Prévot 1935, 142–6), later assimilated its meaning to that of the auxiliary aorist εἶδον, which, together with the desiderative ὄψομαι and the perfects ὄπωπα and ἑόρακα, formed the most common paradigm used in Attic from Homer onwards (Prévot 1935, 158–9). The only other verb which stood beside ὁράω and was later to supersede it is βλέπω, which, however, always kept its opposite meaning of active, intentional and expressive viewing. This process appears complete already in Attic, in the κοινή and in Modern Greek, where the standard system is formed by βλέπω and εἶδα. Apollonius, Nonnus and Colluthus follow the Homeric choice to avoid βλέπω (Prévot 1935, 135 and Prier 1989, 269). Thordarson 1971, 121–2 suggests that the absence of this verb may be due to its original expressivity and vulgarity, an aspect which cannot be sustained by its uncertain etymology.

55 Prier 1989, 268–9.

56 In the Gospels the fight for predominance no longer involves ὁράω versus βλέπω, but rather θεωρέω versus βλέπω (Thordarson 1972, 119–26). Ὁράω is found rarely in the Gospels, perhaps a choice that was dictated by the necessity of a verb that meant "to

It is useful to consider the only case in Colluthus when ὁράω is used with a slightly different meaning from the passive and unintentional viewing:[57] in 340, the maids ask Hermione οὐχ ὁράᾳς; γοεραὶ μὲν ἐπιμύουσιν ὀπωπαί, "Do you not see? Your tearful eyes cannot see (are closed over)." The maids are surprised and are seeking to convince Hermione that Helen has not left but has perhaps joined a meeting of women or has stopped off on the banks of the Eurotas. The maids think that they are seeing the truth, but what they see is actually a false notion of the truth, and with a rhetorical question they interrogate the child about a fake truth which she cannot possibly see. Sorrow and desperation can indeed prevent one from seeing the truth or reality, just as any other emotional alteration: one may not see reality for what it is when in anger or in a state of excitement, as may happen with intoxication. Therefore, if the maids were actually aware of the truth, this "emotional blindness" of Hermione would make perfect sense. However, what on the one hand complicates matters further, and on the other makes them more deceitful, is the duplicity of illusion that surrounds Helen's destiny: the maids think she is gone to meet women at an assembly, while Hermione is convinced that she has left. Illusion wraps reality in two different ways, and even those who are supposing and believing that they see the truth, do not really see it; we are then left with two blind parties: not only Hermione, who is justified in her blindness because of her being a child,[58] upset and blinded by tears, but also the maids, who are blind although they are adults, emotionally unaltered and not blinded by tears in their eyes.

The reader is then the only party who sees the truth, being aware of what happened to Helen from the tale told just a few lines earlier, and also knowing how the story enfolds. The reader therefore holds a privileged position, as he looks from the outside to both the maids and Hermione in their unawareness of what the truth actually is. This generates a sort of urge to act, which may seem almost like saying to the maids: "No, she is right in suspecting that something has happened. Helen really has abandoned her", but instead, readers are left in the frustrating position of being unable to help Hermione. It is

contemplate, to witness, to observe", a meaning well expressed by θεωρέω, which was also widely employed for this purpose in religion, philosophy and science in classical times (Prévot 1935, 268–9).

57 The other occurrences, where the verb is clearly used to define an intentional, passive viewing, are: 69, of Zeus seeing the quarrel; 85, of Aphrodite seeing her children; 123, of Paris seeing Hermes; 193, of Paris pursuing the one whom he had not seen; 215, of Paris seeing Phyllis' nine-circle path; 257, of Helen as soon as she saw Paris; 262, of Helen seeing no quiver of arrows on Paris' face; 273, of Helen seeing Paris' face; 381, of Hermione not seeing her mother; 392, of Cassandra who sees the newcomer (Helen).

58 She was nine years old when she was abandoned by her mother (Apollod. *Epit.* 9.3).

like watching a violent act from the outside, wishing to be able to prevent it or help the victim.

Sympathy, raised in readers through the presence of a helpless, upset and abandoned child who is also misled by a false reality, may then turn into frustration, but luckily Hermione has a dream and decides to follow her instincts and to seek her father's help. Interestingly, the dream also provides another false truth if we accept that the one who speaks is actually Helen and not her eidolon of Euripidean memory.[59] Helen herself lies and tells her, at 379–80, that a deceitful man (ἀπατήλιος ἀνήρ) kidnapped her from her house. Hermione is then pointed in another direction again, where she does find out that her mother is not returning (as she initially feared), but she is once again cheated on the actual truth, i.e. her mother's real intentions and the circumstances in which she has left the house. Helen leads her to believe that Paris has kidnapped her and omits to say that she has left willingly, a fact that is clearly illustrated with her words ἕψομαι, ὡς Κυθέρεια γάμων βασίλεια κελεύει (315). The choice of an active verb, placed as the first word in the line, leaves no doubts about Helen's decision, immediately justified by her interest in the buildings that sit on the foundations laid by Poseidon and Apollo,[60] and her commitment to obeying Aphrodite's orders. Everything is going according to the plan that Aphrodite had revealed to Paris in Lucian *Dear. Iud.* 15.1–4: κἀπειδὰν ἀφίκῃ εἰς τὴν Λακεδαίμονα, ὄψεταί σε ἡ Ἑλένη. τοὐντεῦθεν δὲ ἐμὸν ἂν εἴη τὸ ἔργον, ὅπως ἐρασθήσεταί σου καὶ ἀκολουθήσει, "when you will arrive to Sparta, Helen will see you: from that moment on, it will be my duty to make her fall in love and follow you".[61] The same plan had also been revealed to Helen by the goddess (via Iris) in *Il.* 3.136–8: αὐτὰρ Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ ἀρηΐφιλος Μενέλαος / μακρῇς ἐγχείῃσι μαχήσονται περὶ σεῖο· / τῷ δέ κε νικήσαντι φίλη κεκλήσῃ ἄκοιτις, "But Alexander and Menelaus dear to Ares will fight for you with their long spears, and you will be the dear bride of the winner".

To return to the use of ὁράω, the verb here continues to refer to a passive viewing and is even more justified as it designates perception: in fact the maids mean "Can you not see [the truth], i.e. can you not understand?", and immediately justify her not seeing with the fact that her eyes are shut by tears, thus

59 I am convinced that this is the case, as the presence of Helen's image would not lead to the pun of her behaviour contrasting with her version of the story. If the eidolon were speaking in the dream, Helen would not actually be a liar, and her behaviour would not offer the poet any room for judgement, given that her departure is justified by her willingness to obey Aphrodite's orders.

60 Colluthus' humour again; see Combellack 1971, 49.

61 Paschalis 2008, 138.

preventing her from seeing reality (or what they think that is). The verb is used to signify the act of "not seeing" something, or rather "failing to see something" also at 381, where Hermione wakes up after a dream in which she has seen Helen but fails to see her: once again, she fails to see a false reality.[62] In both cases the girl is presented as not seeing reality (οὐχ ὁράᾳς, οὐχ ὁρόωσα) but is, in fact, seeing it.

The ambiguity of Hermione's vision is also announced by the words chosen by Colluthus to describe her dream directly before this scene, at 371–2 ἡ μὲν ἀλητεύουσα δολοφροσύνῃσιν ὀνείρων μητέρα παπταίνειν ᾠίσατο, "wandering amongst the trickeries of dreams, she thought she was seeing her mother." Readers should also remember what the poet had previously said about dreams, at 318–23:[63]

> νὺξ δέ [...] δοιὰς δὲ πύλας ᾤιξεν ὀνείρων,
> τὴν μὲν ἀληθείης—κεράων ἀπελάμπετο κόσμος—
> ἔνθεν ἀναθρῴσκουσι θεῶν νημερτέες ὀμφαί,
> τὴν δὲ δολοφροσύνης, κενεῶν θρέπτειραν ὀνείρων.
>
> And night [...] opened the two gates of dreams: the one of the truth—it gleamed with the sheen of horns—where the divine oracles sprang up, infallible; the other, the gate of illusion, feeder of vain dreams.

Deceitful dreams are in both instances described with the word δολοφροσύνη: we can be in no doubt about the falseness of what Hermione has seen in her dreams; they are also described as "fruitless" or "vain" (κενεός 323),[64] i.e. devoid of the ἀληθεία that marks true dreams, those of unmistaken oracles. Therefore, just as she had not believed what her maids had previously told her about her mother's disappearance, Hermione now disbelieves her dream and realises that Helen has not returned; thus, she immediately acts on it and sends a message to her father in Crete.

Ironically, the truth is seen by a little girl: her rejection of illusion is much more powerful as she manages to see reality despite her young age, her distress and especially the fact that she has not actually seen Helen with her own eyes, but she simply feels what is true. Hermione proves here that eyes are not even necessary to see what is real.

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62 On deceitful dreams in the *Dionysiaca* (e.g. 20.35–98) see Auger 2003, 415–20 and Chrétien 1985, 148–9.

63 For the epic models of the scene, see James 1981, 140–2.

64 The adjective often refers to unfounded ἐλπίδες (Simon. 5.16), φόβοι (Eur. *Suppl.* 548).

Hermione's anguish reminds us of rape scenes as in *h.Dem.* 20–1, where Persephone is lamenting and crying when abducted. The girl's behaviour also represents an interesting inversion of the traditional role of mother-looking-for-child (as, again, in *h.Dem.* 40 and Claud. *Rapt.*): in Colluthus, it is the child who is searching for her mother.[65]

Finally, let us consider how Hermione's anguish is viewed by the maids. Among the contexts in which heroes can become the object of other characters' gaze, Hawley included madness.[66] Hermione is not suffering physical pain, but her distress is clear from her abundant crying and her gestures (she throws away her veil at 328). Her behaviour can be seen as similar to that of Sophocles' Oedipus, who questions himself and ultimately deprives himself of his eyes, as they have failed to judge the truth. In this logic, Hermione can then be seen to fulfil the requirements to be considered by other characters, since her psychological trauma functions as a physical wound and makes her a legitimate object of the viewers' gaze.

Παπταίνω[67] implies affective connotations, its meaning being "to throw fearful looks everywhere" or "to look for something through the eyes with fear". In Homer, the verb is used to describe a glance of terror,[68] as in *Od.* 12.232–3, where Odysseus tires his eyes while throwing glances of fear everywhere to spot Scylla. Prier explains that the direction of the viewing implied by this verb works from the inside out, as the terror glance originates from the νόος, and is like the darting sight of an eagle searching in all directions for a prey with its eyes, like Menelaus' look in *Il.* 17.674–8. Therefore, the viewing expressed by παπταίνω is bi-directional as, on the one hand, the viewer is darting glances out in all directions and, on the other hand, the glance itself comes from his mind and is a result of his perception of the object viewed.

Colluthus uses the verb with this specific meaning in three[69] of the five occurrences. In particular, the verb is used in a passage in conjunction with the only two occurrences of δοκεύω (263–5) about Helen:

65 See more on this in Chapter 4.

66 Hawley 1998, 86–93. More on this below.

67 Traditionally restricted to epic, this is a Homeric verb of popular origin (Prévot 1935, 257).

68 Prier 1989, 26–7.

69 At 359, Hermione lengthily scans the trees and woods in fear in search of her mother; at 372, Hermione, in fear, thinks that she sees her mother in her dreams (a deceitful environment, as discussed).

πολλάκι δ' ἀγλαΐῃσιν ἐυγλήνοισι προσώπων
παπταίνειν ἐδόκευε τὸν ἡμερίδων βασιλῆα·
ἀλλ' οὐχ ἡμερίδων θαλερὴν ἐδόκευεν ὀπώρην.

And more than once she searched with her eyes his beautiful face and bright eyes, to see the king of vine. But she did not manage to spot any swollen fruit of the vine.

We can detect a certain fear in Helen while she seeks to recognise the stranger and for a moment she fears that she is actually staring at Dionysus. The multi-direction element of her looking is expressed by πολλάκι at 263, which reflects πάντοσε and πάντῃ of the above-mentioned Homeric passage.

Δοκεύω means "to spy" and designates the action of focussing on one thing only (opposite to παπταίνω, which indicates the darting gaze in all directions), albeit with a passive connotation due to its derivation from δέχομαι, "to receive".[70] It is used in Homer about heroes who watch their prey with the intention of killing,[71] and thus implies a brutal force that comes from within the viewer but is directed outwards.[72] The focus of this intense gaze seems to be in Homer the key to success, and this element may be the link with the meaning of "to keep one's gaze fixed on something", considered by Prévot exceptional, as in *Il.* 23.325, where Nestor advises his son to watch closely the man in the lead if he wants to win a horse race.[73] Colluthus may be playing on the ambivalence of meaning of this verb in his time, firstly emphasising Helen's search for hints, and then the negative result of her search.

Finally, a few considerations are required on two verbs that are used by Colluthus in an interesting way. Ὀπιπεύω means "to look with prying eyes at":

70 Prévot 1935, 253–4.

71 For instance, *Il.* 8.340 and 13.545–6.

72 Prier 1989, 37.

73 In *Od.* 5.571–5 Odysseus, following Calypso's advice to keep the Bear constellation on his left hand-side in order to successfully cross the sea, cannot sleep and closely watches the Bear, which in turn is casting on Orion, pointing at a particular direction. The directions of the gazes here form a field of forces, the geometric cosmos of Prier 1989, 38. See also *AP* 5.253 by Irenaeus Referendarius, a contemporary of Colluthus: τίπτε πέδον, Χρύσιλλα, κάτω νεύουσα δοκεύεις, "why do you bend your head down and stare at the ground, Chrysilla".

this viewing is curious, secret and dangerous.[74] An inner and active drive to watch something secretly is well expressed in *Il.* 7.243, where Hector wants to face Ajax in open battle, not in a secret ambush: λάθρῃ ὀπιπεύσας, ἀλλ' ἀμφαδόν. Curiosity is present in both occurrences in Colluthus: at 256 where Helen looks curiously in front of the thick doors, and in 261 she believes she is seeing Eros.

Διακρίνω is used by Colluthus exclusively as a technical verb always referring to the selection process of the goddesses' beauty contest, and it is also only used in this context within the poem.[75]

## 3 Description of Characters' Gestures and Appearance

Detailed physical description is approached differently by genres and especially periods, with factors such as gender, and cultural and social conventions playing an important role in addressing the viewer's reaction to the spectacle. A male or a female viewer may gaze and react differently depending on the social standards of the time, as well explained by Hawley, who focusses on the ocular culture of the fifth century BC in particular.[76]

In Homer, the physical aspect of heroes is normally not described, Thersites being a rare exception in *Il.* 2.216–9.[77] Homeric descriptions of heroes focus instead on heroes' virtue, κλέος, prowess and courage by which they are recognised[78] and through which their reputation travels, by means of the bards' songs.

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74 In *Od.* 19.67 Odysseus peeps at women.

75 Lucian used the expression δικαστὴς γενέσθαι in *Dear. Iud.* 7.18.

76 Hawley 1998.

77 While putting on their armour, heroes may be described, "as if these external attributes partly define masculine heroism" (Hawley 1998, 94). Bodies of wounded, dying or dead heroes are also often described in the *Iliad*, and in Helen's teichoscopy (*Il.* 3.161–242), a very visual episode in which Helen identifies heroes for Priam (Constantinidou 1994, 2) there are some vague references to the heroes' size and height. Antenor, who describes Odysseus as πολύμητις and fixing his gaze onto the ground, says that they did not mind his looks. Odysseus' beautification by the hands of Athena in *Od.* 6.224–37, similar to his reunion with Penelope in book 23, where the hero also bathes (as Paris does in Colluthus) can probably be justified as a divine phenomenon through which a goddess enhances the hero's physical appearance to make him more desirable for Nausicaa.

78 Segal 1995 in particular analyses how κλέος is used (sometimes ironically) as an identification and recognition criterion in the *Odyssey*, and how heroes achieve (and indeed may lose) this vital attribute. Here, too, intellectual skills only are instrumental to building κλέος: so Odysseus and Penelope excel equally in δόλοι and μῆτις (see especially, 208–10),

In fifth-century theatre, heroes are described and offered to the voyeuristic eye of viewers only in situations of pain (Heracles in Sophocles' *Trachiniai* or Euripides' *Hippolytus*); suicide on stage (like Euripides' *Alcestis* and Sophocles' *Ajax*); humiliation (as Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, who first receives proskinesis by Clytaemnestra and is later murdered by her, and as the sex-deprived men in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*); illness or madness (Aeschylus' Orestes in the *Eumenides* and Sophocles' *Oedipus*); and finally in scenes of disguise (Aristophanes' Agathon in the *Thesmophoriazusae*).[79] Corpses and wounded bodies are treated with particular interest by tragedians (a legacy from Homer): Heracles takes a long time to die in *Trachiniai*, thus offering a painful spectacle to the audience, which is forced to watch. Often, wounded bodies represent the central element of the "looking", as happens in Euripides' *Phoenician Women*, especially when the gruesome duel between Eteocles[80] and Polynices is graphically described in 1246–1481,[81] or with the description of the violent death of Parthenopaeus in 1159–61, which has a more powerful impact than other heroes' deaths as he was young and beautiful.[82]

Hawley[83] explains tragedy's interest in displaying males in situations of weakness through drama's reflection of the awareness of the many social groups in the fifth century BC. By presenting masculinity threatened by alterations of the mind, pain, and sexual humiliation, theatre aims in fact at highlighting masculinity as the force that wins through all these challenges. Spectators are forced to question and realise the differences between weak femininity and superior masculinity,[84] and to ask themselves whether gender is simply a matter of external attributes, φύσις or νόμος.

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and, in particular, Odysseus' guile is ironically enormous when compared to his actual size beside the Cyclops (*Od.* 9.513–16). Strength and valour in battle become futile for Odysseus, who needs a value that goes beyond the ἀρετή in the battlefield of the *Iliad*.

79 Hawley 1998, 86–93.

80 Visuality plays an important role in this drama, as well explained by Cairns 2005, 133, who highlights how the terrible look in Eteocles' eyes (δεινὸν ὄμμα) graphically transmits his rage towards his brother, who, in turn, demonstrates his lack of respect for him by looking away.

81 Discussed in Hawley 1998, 95–6; see also Craik 1988, 95.

82 Zeitlin 1994.

83 Hawley 1998, 94–5.

84 Hawley 1998, 92 also explains how (strong) masculinity can be "created" by female characters (as *Clytaemnestra*) only through inner qualities, while (weak) femininity can be achieved by male characters by simply wearing feminine clothes (as Pentheus in Euripides' *Bacchae*).

The lack of physical description in Homer and in classical drama contrasts with the abundance of details spent on protagonists of later literature. In the novel, a full description of the beautiful young lovers is normally provided on the occasion of their first meeting, when visual interaction plays an important role, as we will see below. In late-antique epic, descriptions of characters are equally rich: Claudian, in *Rapt.* 2.36–55, describes Proserpina's physical beauty and attire ("her outfit was gathered together and clasped with a rounded gemstone", 40),[85] and closes the detailed portrait with *tali luxuriat cultu* (55), "such was the elegant attire she presented herself in". John Malalas in the sixth century AD describes the Homeric heroes at length in *Chron.* 5.13–40.

Furthermore, in tragedy males were to avoid the female's erotic gaze,[86] as the Hippolytus Calyptomenos in Euripides, but in the novel and in late literature the opposite occurs: for instance, in Longus bodies are described and erotically gazed at by both Daphnis and Chloe (*Daph.* 1.13, 15–16, 24).[87]

Colluthus devotes particular attention to the description of his characters' appearance, both their physical elements (hair, eyes) and other elements such as their attire, movements and gesticulation. What follows is an analysis of how Colluthus deals with ekphrastic features, with reference to his descriptions, since the epyllion does not contain an ekphrasis per se, i.e. an individual description of an artwork or any other external character or event, displayed in the shape of a digression. For this purpose, it is useful to recall Webb's (and, later, Elsner's) differentiation of the definitions of ekphrasis;[88] ekphrasis is here intended as the vivid description of any visual phenomenon.

One more specification is necessary about the nature of descriptions, which, being representations of an object or phenomenon through the eyes of the narrator, necessarily come as impressions of an indirect source: the viewer sees a landscape, for instance, and describes it to the reader. Truth is already filtered by one pair of eyes, and has inevitably become impression before we hear about it. The subjective perception of the viewer/narrator plays an important role here, and one may say that all ekphraseis are also evaluations. Some of the descriptions included in the *Abduction of Helen*, voiced by the poet (or other characters), have a stronger ethical connotation and therefore may be closer to evaluations rather than to ekphrastic descriptions. A judgement of Colluthus is detectable, for instance, in Δύσπαρις (194), "ill-fated Paris": here, the line between how Paris is described and how Paris is presented (a positive

85 Claudian also describes the goddesses in detail in 2.11–35.

86 Hawley 1998, 90, and see also above.

87 Morales 2004.

88 Webb 1999; Elsner 2007, 20.

or negative light) by the author is thin. While being aware of this duplicity, I have considered in this section all descriptions, including those that imply an opinion of the poet or of other characters.

Fusillo[89] deals with ekphrasis as a description of an artwork only, and distinguishes between ekphraseis of a digressive type that are not related to the main storyline and that favour everyday life scenes, such as Achilles' shield in the *Iliad* (18.578–608), and ekphraseis that imply a connection with the subject of the plot, which is the preferred type in Hellenism with Apollonius, Moschus and then Virgil. In Catullus 64, for instance, the love of Ariadne and Theseus is intertwined with that of Thetis and Peleus, the protagonists of the carmen. In his description of the Babylonian canopy (*Eph.* 1.12), Xenophon Ephesius follows Apollonius and the nuptial quilt described in Catullus, and Achilles Tatius' model is Moschus' ekphrasis of Europa's flower basket (*Eur.* 37–62). On the other hand, Heliodorus follows the Homeric model, building his ekphraseis as separate digressions of aesthetic nature (like in his description of the buckle worn by Theagenes in *Aeth.* 3.3. during the Delphic procession and Chariclea's breast band in 3.4).[90] He exploits the potential of the feature less than the other novelists but makes the crucial difference of only describing objects that are crucial to the plot.

Colluthus describes with at least one word most of the characters that appear in the epyllion; for instance, the physical appearance of all the gods attending the wedding of Thetis and Peleus is described as they arrive: Apollo's hair is buffeted by the wind (25–6), Persuasion carries a bridal wreath and Eros' quiver (30–1), and Ares is presented without his helmet, his breast-plate and his sword (36–8). In the *Abduction*, descriptions not always represent just an illustration of the characters' appearance but often reveal their emotional state, as happens with Eris, whose frustration is expressed through her wandering in search of a way to disrupt the divine banquet (45), her rage by her jumping up and down in her chair (47), her evil intentions by her throwing the apple amidst the banquet whirling her hand (62–3). At the beginning of the judgement scene, Hera rises up in astonishment (65), and the complete desperation of Hermione is expressed vividly through her gesticulation, language and behaviour: she casts her veil away (328)[91] and cries, in fact, throughout the whole episode (over twenty words related to crying and sorrow in 328–88). Gesticulation and body language are used to make the inner emotions of the

89 Fusillo 1989, 88–90.

90 Whitmarsh 2002.

91 In Claud. *Rapt.* 3.149–50 Ceres tears her cloak to pieces and then her hair.

characters visible to the readers,[92] as facial expression, especially that of the eyes, is often used in Homer to substitute or to add colour to acts or words.[93] This form of ekphrasis acquires a pictorial value as it enhances the emotive status of the characters and brings it out for everyone to see, almost as if the readers were looking at a painting or at a sculpture.

Colluthus' most detailed descriptions focus on the two key roles in the epyllion: Paris and Aphrodite. Interestingly, Helen's body is not directly described except for a couple of remarks made by Paris, in which he refers to her as the prize of the contest (περικλήιστον, ἐμῶν ἀντάξιον ἔργων, / νύμφην ἱμερόεσσαν, "a worthy recompense for my labours, a glorious and desirable wife," 294–5). The fact that Aphrodite deserves a description reinforces the impression that her role within the plot is primary and that her power is fiercer than Helen's beauty.

### 3.1 *Paris' Visual Evolution*

We have seen how the first impression of Paris that the poet creates in his readers is that of an ignorant shepherd, someone who has inappropriately been put in charge of judging the immortals. His pastoral attire includes a goat's skin and a crook (108–10).[94] Next, Colluthus describes Paris' love of music and singing, and how he neglects his duties to play his pipe (112–3, 104–5, 123–6). Music is the first feature to introduce a new element to the first impression that Paris had made, and the description of the effects of his music on the animal world contributes to slightly changing the reader's opinion (117–21):

> οὐ κύνες ὠρύοντο καὶ οὐ μυκήσατο ταῦρος,
> μούνη δ' ἠνεμόεσσα, βοῆς ἀδίδακτος ἐοῦσα,
> Ἰδαίων ὀρέων ἀντίθροος ἴαχεν Ἠχώ.
> ταῦροι δὲ χλοερῆς κεκορηότες ὑψόθι ποίης,
> κεκλιμένοι βαρύγουνον ἐπ' ἰσχίον εὐνάζοντο.

92 Cairns 2005 explores the inner emotions—especially in relation to characters' social status, role and τιμή—conveyed by the acts of looking straight at somebody and looking away from somebody; see also Konstan 2006.

93 Constantinidou 1994, 1–4 and 7–9 examines a few Homeric formulaic expressions in which the eyes of heroes are compared to fire and express anger or frenzy boiling inside them. See also Miguélez-Cavero 2009 on Nonnus' gesturality in particular.

94 In one of the *Abduction*'s main models, the Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite* (84–90), the object of Anchises' gaze is Aphrodite, whose appearance is described as a θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι, a visual phenomenon that instils amazement in the viewer.

> No dog barked, nor a bull bellowed: only Echo, unable to speak, resounded back with the wind from the hills of Ida, and the bulls laid down, replete, on the green grass, and rested their lazy haunches.

Suddenly, we no longer see an ignorant herdsman but a pipe-playing shepherd who honours Pan with his music in an idyllic scenario. The calm created by Paris' song reminds us of the civic harmony restored by Apollonius' Orpheus in *Arg*. 1.494–512; here, music brings back rationality after aggression and resolves the quarrel as it happened with Demodocus in Homer.[95]

Colluthus exploits the visual impact that Paris' movements and gesticulation can have on readers. The physicality of characters' behaviour creates an all-round scene in which they move in three dimensions. The reader, who becomes almost a viewer,[96] is forced to imagine Paris playing his pipe, moving in a bucolic landscape. The language of poetry and the visual language of art (sculpture but also painting) work together to create a picturesque image for the readers. Colluthus may have known (or known of) certain artworks[97] in which Paris was pictured playing a lyre,[98] where he is surrounded by five goats,[99] testifying to his pastoral role. In Fig. B Paris holds a lyre on a rocky outcrop, a sort of natural throne: could this have inspired the image of Paris οἰοπόλοισιν ἐφεδριόωντα θοώκοις of the proem (15)?

Paris' crook also often appears in his iconography,[100] as in a sarcophagus relief from the third century AD,[101] where he is portrayed as seated on a rock holding his usual stick.

Paris the shepherd is portrayed as an easily frightened boy: as he sees Hermes, he jumps up in fear and avoids the look of the gods (123–4, 127). Averting the gaze can convey a feeling of fear and, when the viewer is looking away from a god, a sense of respect due to a wide gap in status.[102] In tragedy, female erotic

95 Mori 2008, 80–81.

96 Goldhill 2007, 3, Agosti 2006b, 352–3.

97 On the influence of visual art on late-antique poetry, and on poets seeking to re-create the effects of visual arts through words, see Roberts 1989, 66–71, 118.

98 Weitzmann cat. no. 227–30 (four roundels with bucolic scenes, from Egypt, fifth century AD); *LIMC s.v.* Paris no. 13 (p. 107), 20 (p. 109), 30 and 34 (p. 111), 34b, 35 and 36 (p. 112), 38 and 39 (p. 113), all dated between 550 and 440 BC.

99 Weitzmann cat. no. 232 (plate with shepherd from Constantinople, 527–565 AD).

100 *LIMC s.v.* Paris: no. 39 (p. 113), 40 (p. 114), 46 (p. 116), 50 (p. 117), 52a (p. 118), all dated between 440 BC and 325 BC.

101 *LIMC s.v.* Paris no. 82b (p. 124), today at the Louvre, Paris.

102 Cairns 2005, 134.

gaze was to be avoided by males, for this could threaten their masculinity, as in Christ. *AP* 2.219–20, where Paris seeks to avoid the look of tearful Oenone: εἶχε δ' ὀπωπὴν / πλαζομένην ἑτέρωσε δυσίμερος.

When Zeus instructs Hermes on the task to be assigned to Paris, he describes him in quite a different way: παῖδα Πάριν Πριάμοιο (72). The phrase κουρίζων … Πάρις (104) confirms the shepherd's young age. Paris himself also states that Priam is his father in his introductory speech to Helen (285), where he also outlines his lineage, claiming direct descent from Zeus since he descends from Dardanus who, in turn, was the son of Zeus (286); he also states that the walls of his fatherland were built by Poseidon and Apollo (289–90). We are then indirectly informed about Paris' status in 142, where Athena says φασί σε κοιρανέειν καὶ Τρώιον ἄστυ φυλάσσειν: this is the first instance in which Paris is introduced as a king and no longer as a shepherd (although the goddess is reporting second-hand information). His transformation has begun. Paris' status is then unquestionably confirmed by Hera, who, by means of an encomiastic *captatio benevolentiae*, first calls him a βασιλεύς (150) and then goes on to outline the duties of a κοίρανος (151), the category in which she sees Paris. But it is then Paris himself who, in his speech (280–304)[103] to Helen upon his arrival at her house, confirms, among other things,[104] his status: he is a prince (ἀριστεύων) and meets the requirements of his race (ἐμφύλια πάντα διώκω 284).

Paris' new role is demanding and places him in a similar league as Zeus, as he becomes dispenser of θέμις, a concern traditionally associated with Zeus.[105] This new role had been anticipated in the proem, where the Nymphs were asked by the poet to reveal the plans of the shepherd-judge (5) and the occasion for a shepherd to judge immortals (11), and it had also been established earlier by Zeus: διακρίνειν δὲ θεάων / κέκλεο (74–5). Ignorant of rhetoric, Paris is now expected to judge the goddesses' words (their promises are purely verbal, with the exception of Aphrodite). We will see later how the prince sings to Helen his song of seduction modelled on Aphrodite's speech.

His full transition into the new role of judge is marked by Hermes' speech, where Paris is told to leave his milking pail and his flocks (128) to become a judge: δεῦρο θεμιστεύσειας ἐπουρανίῃσι δικάζων· / δεῦρο διακρίνων (129–30). From now on, Paris no longer fears the gods as he seeks to judge the goddesses'

103 See *infra* in this chapter. Here, I will focus only on how Paris introduces himself.
104 The elements he covers in his presentation are the traditional ones of Homeric heroes: his lineage, his ancestors, his descent from Zeus, and his achievements.
105 See n. 46 p. 48.

beauty (διακρίνειν πειρήσατο 133). His new role as an administrator of justice is reinforced by the technical verb διακρίνω, which is used three times in reference to Paris:[106] at 74 (where Zeus told Hermes to order Paris to judge), and at 130 and 133, making δίκη clearly Paris' business, as anticipated in the proem by τίς δὲ δικασπολίη (12), reiterated by δίκης προπάροιθεν (137), and especially by Paris' self-identification at 291–3:

> αὐτὰρ ἐγώ, βασίλεια, δικασπόλος εἰμὶ θεάων·
> καὶ γὰρ ἀκηχεμένῃσιν ἐπουρανίῃσι δικάζων
> Κύπριδος ἀγλαΐην καὶ ἐπήρατον ᾔνεσα μορφήν

> And I, queen, am judge to the goddesses: for I judged amongst the irritated heavenly goddesses, and I chose the beauty of Cypris and her charming shape.

We find Paris once again at 167, after he has fulfilled his judging duties. Naively mesmerised by the sight of Aphrodite's bare chest, he rushes to hand over to her the prize of beauty (οὔπω μῦθος ἔληγεν, ὁ δ᾽ἀγλαὸν ὤπασε μῆλον 167). This passage is strikingly similar to *Claudian's Rapt*. 1.117 *vix ea fatus erat, iam nuntius astra tenebat*, where Mercury hurries to carry the message from Pluto to Jupiter. Once again, this is an element that may prove Colluthus' knowledge of Claudian's works and of Latin.

As simple and perhaps shallow as it may seem, Paris' choice makes perfect sense given that his criterion is just to favour what looks best to him; once again, the visual impact is thus reinforced. On closer inspection, the two rivals of Aphrodite do not seem to come remotely close to the goddess' sex appeal. On her arrival at the wedding of Thetis and Peleus, Athena is helmetless (32), and reluctantly attends the ceremony, being ignorant of marriage (33): we may imagine her as slightly unfriendly, certainly the un-flirtatious type, given that she usually wears a helmet. Moreover, Aphrodite shares in her invective a few unflattering details regarding Athena, who is accused of covering her body in bronze garments (184) and of avoiding love to pursue instead the works of Ares (185). What can possibly be less attractive, in the eyes of Paris (but also in those of Colluthus' probably mainly masculine audience), than a woman who does not want to be one? Beside topless Aphrodite, breast-plated Athena simply does not stand a chance.

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106 The verb occurs six times in the epyllion, always about the beauty contest: at 76 referred to "the one who is chosen", at 87 beauty of face is Aphrodite's judge, at 148 about Paris' choice in Hera's speech.

Colluthus does not share any details about Hera's appearance, including when the time comes for the three goddesses to make the most of their looks (81): nothing is said about Athena and Hera, while Aphrodite's coquetry is described at length as she styles her hair. Finally, when it is time to convince Paris, Athena and Hera rely only on their verbal promises, while Aphrodite, topless, teases him with the promise of an equally beautiful spouse, her own sister, who will give him what he now can only desire.

Paris' role as a just judge reaches a paradoxical climax in the final portrait that Colluthus gives us of him: in Hermione's dream, Helen describes him as ὁ ἀπατήλιος ἀνήρ (380), and Hermione as τις ἀνὴρ ἀθεμίστιος (385). The initial description of Paris as θεμιστοπόλος and δικασπόλος is completely reversed as we now find a deceitful and lawless man. Ἀπατήλιος and ἀθεμίστιος mark a definite change in Paris' status to the extreme opposite of the δίκη of which he was earlier a minister. Colluthus began with a description of Paris as a naive shepherd who knew nothing and yet was put in charge of judging the goddesses; he progressed to the role of judge, completing his task; finally, the circle is closed when Paris is perceived (by Helen and her daughter) not as a man who has or knows no law, but instead as someone who has cheated them.

Zeus describes Paris as τὸν ἀγλαὸν ἡβητῆρα (71), anticipating another aspect of the image that readers should perceive of the character and that will become more striking after the beauty contest: his beauty. To create this image, the poet uses the picturesque description of his bathing (231–5), which contrasts strongly with the previous description of Paris as a shepherd among his flocks, with a goat's skin hanging down his thigh (108–9). As he approaches the time of his meeting with Helen, Paris prepares and beautifies himself by bathing in the river:

> αὐτὰρ ὁ χιονέοιο λοεσσάμενος ποταμοῖο
> ᾤχετο φειδομένοισιν ἐπ' ἴχνεσιν ἴχνος ἐρείδων,
> μὴ πόδες ἱμερόεντες ὑποχραίνοιντο κονίης,
> μὴ πλοκάμων κυνέῃσιν ἐπιβρίσαντες ἐθείρας
> ὀξύτερον σπεύδοντος ἀναστέλλοιεν ἀῆται.
>
> And he bathed in the snowy river, he came out leaning his foot with careful steps, minding that his charming feet are not soiled with sand, and that the winds, blowing heavily on his helmet, do not unravel the curls of his hair, if he walks too fast.

Before his meeting with Nausicaa, Odysseus also washes himself in a river, and Athena enhances his beauty (*Od.* 6.223–35). In Paris' case, there is no divine

intervention, although the process can probably be considered as part of Aphrodite's plan. The care he takes in coming out of the waters, making sure that his feet do not get soiled and that his curly hair does not become tossed if he rushes out, seems unexpected if we recall the speed at which he earlier handed the prize over to Helen and put out to sea, eager to claim his bride (193–200). Paris' beautification by the hands of Aphrodite brings to mind of course Anchises' divine looks in *h.Aphr.*: he is δέμας ἀθανάτοισιν ἐοικώς at 55 and ἥρωα θεῶν ἄπο κάλλος ἔχοντα at 77. Cadmus also has beautiful hair and feet in Nonn. *Dion*. 4.130–4, where Aphrodite, disguised as Peisinoe, delivers a persuasive encomium of him to Harmonia in the (successful) attempt to make her fall in love with him.[107]

Hairstyles represent a descriptive feature to which Colluthus pays particular attention, as can be seen in the previous chapter about Aphrodite. The description of his characters' hairdo makes them recognisable for the readers and builds a visual identity that, once again, contributes to the vividness of the characters. Colluthus focusses his descriptive attention on the head of his characters,[108] also often describing their headgear[109] and the movements of their faces, such as their smiles.[110]

Paris' plan does not come as a surprise: as the goddesses beautified themselves earlier in the poem, so does he, investing in his grooming to make an impression. Baths seem to be a crucial weapon of allurement, especially in the novel; for instance, in Longus 1.13, Daphnis' bath seems miraculous in Chloe's eyes: ὅτι δὲ μὴ πρότερον αὐτῇ καλὸς ἐδόκει, τὸ λουτρὸν ἐνόμιζε τοῦ κάλλους αἴτιον, "she thought that since he hadn't seemed beautiful to her before, the bathing must be the cause of his beauty",[111] so much so that she becomes almost addicted to watching him bathing again (ὅτι μὴ Δάφνιν ἐπεθύμει λουόμενον ἰδέσθαι πάλιν).[112]

107 Frangoulis 2006, 45–50.

108 Paschalis 2008, 144.

109 Helmetless Athena (32), and Ares (36); Hermione wears a veil (328), as Cassandra (391).

110 Ares arrives to Peleus and Thetis' wedding smiling (39); Athena (137) and Aphrodite—the smiling goddess—(159) smile during the contest.

111 Trans. C. Gill. Chloe also blames his pipe as the reason for finding him so attractive. The motif reoccurs at 1.22 and 32.

112 Chloe embraces voyeurism: ἔπεισε δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ λούσασθαι πάλιν καὶ λουόμενον εἶδε καὶ ἰδοῦσα ἥψατο καὶ ἀπῆλθε πάλιν ἐπαινέσασα, καὶ ὁ ἔπαινος ἦν ἔρωτος ἀρχή, "she also persuaded him to have another bath; and as he bathed, she watched him, and after watching she touched him; then she went away, thinking again how handsome he was. And that thought was the beginning of love." The synaesthetic process of falling in love starts from eyesight, moves on to touch, then on to the mind.

The makeover of Colluthus' Paris is successful: at 250–3 he appears handsome enough to challenge Dionysus,[113] and ἀγαλλόμενος (250) puts him in the same league as Aphrodite's beauty (ἀγαλλομένην Ἀφροδίτην 16) and Hera (Ἥρη μὲν παράκοιτις ἀγαλλομένη εὐνῇ 63). The same word is used by Aphrodite when she mocks the manly Athena-like women who exult in glorious wars, κυδαλίμοισιν ἀγαλλόμεναι πολέμοισι (18): the phrase mirrors that which is used in reference to Paris: θεσπεσίῃσιν ἀγαλλόμενος χαρίτεσσιν (250). The other expression used by the poet to describe Paris' facial beauty, ἐπ' ἀγλαΐῃσι προσώπων (253), reoccurs at 263, when Helen is scrutinising Paris' face as she seeks to understand whether he is Eros or not. Therefore, Colluthus sets Paris' feminisation in direct contrast with Athena's masculinity by means of the lexical connection, which suggests to readers the obvious question as to whether Paris' masculinity is at risk here.

As we have seen, facial beauty is established by Aphrodite as the key to success: the fact that now Paris also has a beautiful face makes him a winner, too. In fact, he is so good-looking as to be considered superior in beauty to Dionysus by the poet himself, and to be mistaken for Eros by Helen. Moreover, Aphrodite's statement at 172 ἀγλαΐην ἐφίλησα, καὶ ἀγλαΐη με διώκει implies that if beauty follows her as the winner, beauty also follows him as the winner. In fact, Paris has won a prize (Helen), just as Aphrodite has won the beauty contest; therefore, it seems logical that the goddess' power and beauty extend to him, too. Just as Aphrodite won due to her facial beauty, so Paris wins for having the same quality. In the reader's eyes, the initial image of an ignorant shepherd has now been fully replaced by that of a beautiful prince whose looks are comparable to those of the gods; Colluthus could not have paid a higher compliment to Paris.

By beautifying himself, Paris invests in impressing Helen, an act that may seem unnecessary, as she will be his regardless of his looks or any other circumstance: destiny has already been written by Aphrodite, and things can only go one way as the goddess' will becomes reality. Paris should therefore walk into Helen's house as a confident man ready to collect his bride; instead, he is unsure of the outcome and prepares for the gallant meeting as if its positive ending depended somehow on his effort rather than on Aphrodite's role. It is not simply the word of a goddess that Paris does not seem to fully trust, but also her honesty and fairness. Lucian, in *Dear. Iud.* 16 had highlighted this lack of trust in the dialogue between an almost pedantic Paris and Aphrodite,

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113 See Chapter 4.

where the prince made sure to put things in black and white before committing himself to crowning the goddess as the winner:

> ΠΑΡΙΣ Δέδοικα μή μου ἀμελήσῃς μετὰ τὴν κρίσιν.
> ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ Βούλει οὖν ἐπομόσομαι;
> ΠΑΡΙΣ Μηδαμῶς, ἀλλ' ὑπόσχου πάλιν.
> ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ Ὑπισχνοῦμαι δή σοι τὴν Ἑλένην παραδώσειν
> γυναῖκα, καὶ ἀκολουθήσειν γέ σοι αὐτὴν καὶ
> ἀφίξεσθαι παρ' ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Ἴλιον· καὶ αὐτὴ
> παρέσομαι καὶ συμπράξω τὰ πάντα.
> ΠΑΡΙΣ Καὶ τὸν Ἔρωτα καὶ τὸν Ἵμερον καὶ τὰς Χάριτας ἄξεις;
> ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ Θάρρει, καὶ τὸν Πόθον καὶ τὸν Ὑμέναιον ἔτι
> πρὸς τούτοις παραλήψομαι.
> ΠΑΡΙΣ Οὐκοῦν ἐπὶ τούτοις δίδωμι τὸ μῆλον· ἐπὶ τούτοις λάμβανε

> Paris: I fear you may forget about me after the verdict.
> Aphrodite: Do you want me to take an oath then?
> Paris: Not at all; but promise once again.
> Aphrodite: I promise to give you Helen as your wife, and that she will follow you and come to your people in Troy; and I myself will be there and will arrange the whole thing.
> Paris: And shall you bring Love and Desire and the Graces?
> Aphrodite: Do not fear: beside them, I shall bring Desire and Wedlock as well.
> Paris: Then on these conditions I give you the apple: take it on these conditions.

The impression on the reader is that what matters is visual impact: as the goddesses do anything they can to make themselves look their best, so does Paris, hoping to be chosen. Before each of these characters faces a crucial competition, they spend some time focussing on enhancing their hairstyle in particular, above other features of their appearance: Aphrodite wants to be chosen by Paris, Paris wants to be chosen by Helen, and Apollo also wants to shine among the other gods at the wedding. They all invest energies in one asset in particular: their hair. They could have spent some more time improving the appearance of their clothes, for instance; Paris may have been concerned about knocking on Helen's door with a goat's skin hanging down his thigh, but he just worries about his hair and shoes. On the other hand, Aphrodite's

neglect of her own robe makes sense, as she probably had already planned to bare her chest to the judge.

The feminised beauty of the prince-shepherd, which spurs desire (he has πόδες ἱμερόεντες at 233, just as Helen, νύμφην ἱμερόεσσαν at 295),[114] associates him once again with Cadmus, whose portrayal in Nonn. *Dion*. 1, as seen earlier, is an important model for that of Paris in Colluthus. The features of Paris' beauty are the same that make Aphrodite (disguised as Peisinoe) and then Harmonia fall in love with Cadmus. The goddess delivers his encomium to Harmonia in *Dion*. 4.77–176: Cadmus' pink and white feet are as gracious as Paris' (130–32); he has charming hair (4.134), like Paris (234–5); his voice flows like honey (4.140), as that of Paris (279). Nonnus praises the beauty of Cadmus through a virgin in love who offers seduction tips like a man,[115] and by means of compliments which in the novel tradition are conventionally applied to female characters, never to male ones: he is compared not only to a god, as normally happens to heroines, but to a statue of Apollo, an association which, once again, is traditionally reserved to female characters (male characters are usually compared to heroes); his honeyed voice, his sparkling eyes, his rosy cheeks and his meadow-like body remind us of Leucippe; his feet have the same grace as Leucippe's face; his hyacinth-like hair is similar to that of feminised Daphnis as decribed by Gnathon.[116] Nonnus inverts the traditional canons of the novel genre to create a male hero whose effective charm (both Peisinoe and Harmonia love him)[117] is granted by his feminised beauty. Firstly, by means of internal cross-references, Cadmus' praise is voiced by Aphrodite but also by Typhoeus, who, in *Dion*. 1.525–34, was seduced by both his song and his charm; secondly, we see in Tyrian Cadmus Tyrian Clitophon, whose beauty was commended by Melite in Achilles Tatius precisely when he most looked like a woman.[118] As with Cadmus, Paris' beauty is exalted by means of feminine attributes which reminds us of female characters, and his charm is as effective as that of Cadmus (if not more), for not only Helen is unable to resist him, but

114 Only Paris and Helen are defined as desirable in the epyllion: Aphrodite, with her bare chest, for instance, is not defined in this way, although Paris' decision is clearly based on his excitement at the daring sight. Similarly, in Xen. *Mem*. 3, the spectacle of the ἑταίρα Theodote leaves her viewers titillated and unsatisfied, as explained by Goldhill 1998, 181–2, who studied the politics of visual erotic exchange in the dialogue.

115 Frangoulis 2006, 45.

116 Frangoulis 2006, 45–50.

117 Nonn. *Dion*. 4.177–81.

118 Ach. Tat. 5.25.7–8; 6.1.3.

Colluthus himself declares that Paris' beauty is superior to that of Dionysus (252). His masculinity, then, is enhanced, not diminished, by his feminisation.

Paris himself is also actively desiring: ἱμείρων δ' ὑπ' ἔρωτι καὶ ἣν οὐκ εἶδε διώκων, "prey to desire under the influence of love, and pursuing a woman whom he had never even seen" (193). Paris' desire, then, is bidirectional: he desires and is desired; as we shall see later, the same applies to Helen, who almost instantly falls in love with the stranger. However, at 194 we meet Δύσπαρις. The prince is now presented as ill-fated, because his greed will lead to the Trojan War. Colluthus returns here to the Homeric portrait of Paris in *Il.* 3.39=13.769 Δύσπαρι εἶδος ἄριστε γυναιμανὲς ἠπεροπευτά, / αἴθ' ὄφελες ἄγονός τ' ἔμεναι ἄγαμός τ' ἀπολέσθαι, "Wretched Paris, beautiful to look at, crazy about women, beguiler! If only you had never been born, or died unmarried!" He also plays with δυσίμερος (echoed by Colluthus in ἱμείρων 193), a neologism by Apollonius (*Arg.* 3.961=4.4), which is adopted on many occasions by Nonnus,[119] and by Christodorus *AP* 2.220 in his ekphrasis of Paris,[120] where it alludes to the unfortunate loves of Paris. Nonnus, at *Dion.* 9.247, anticipates Ino's conjugal misfortunes with the similar δύσγαμος.

This definition assumes an ethical connotation as Colluthus places it at the beginning of the scene in which the prince is preparing for his journey: he gathers his companions and then the ship is assembled. Various elements contribute to giving the reader the impression of the ill-fated future ahead of this ἀπατήλιος[121] and ἀθεμίστιος man: Phereclus, who cuts the oaks to build the ship, is ἀρχεκάκοιο (197), and the ships are neither planned nor blessed by Athena, the patron of carpentry: νῆας δ' οὐκ ἐνόησε καὶ οὐκ ἤσκησεν Ἀθήνη (201). The journey to recover the desired object of desirable Paris thus begins with a doomed destiny, and this is confirmed by the storm which Paris and his crew encounter shortly after they depart (206).[122] In particular, Colluthus' mention of Phereclus reminds readers of two previous descriptions of the same character, in which he was carrier of the same ruinous destiny: at 196–9, Colluthus says:

> ἔνθα πολυπρέμνοιο δαϊζόμεναι δρύες Ἴδης
> ἤριπον ἀρχεκάκοιο περιφροσύνῃσι Φερέκλου,
> ὃς τότε μαργαίνοντι χαριζόμενος βασιλῆι
> νῆας Ἀλεξάνδρῳ δρυτόμῳ τεκτήνατο χαλκῷ.

119 E.g. Nonn. *Dion.* 1.70, 11.449, 16.339, 33.44.

120 Tissoni 2000a, 178.

121 On the tradition of Paris ἀπατήλιος and ξεναπάτης see n. 339 p. 212.

122 This phenomenon will be discussed later in this chapter.

> There, the oaks of Ida of many tree-trunks were cut, and fell down by the hands of cunning Phereclus, first craftsman of evil, the one who, at that time, eager to please his raging king, framed ships for Alexander with his wood-cutting bronze.

The passage is modelled on Triph. 59–61:

> καὶ δὴ τέμνετο δοῦρα καὶ ἐς πεδίον κατέβαινεν
> Ἴδης ἐξ αὐτῆς, ὁπόθεν καὶ πρόσθε Φέρεκλος
> νῆας Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τεκτήνατο, πήματος ἀρχήν.

> And wood was cut and fell down to the plain of Ida. Ida, from where, in the past, Phereclus built for Alexander the ships that were the beginning of evil.

In turn, Triphiodorus'passage derives from *Il.* 5.62–4:

> ὃς καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τεκτήνατο νῆας ἐΐσας
> ἀρχεκάκους, αἳ πᾶσι κακὸν Τρώεσσι γένοντο
> οἷ τ' αὐτῷ

> For Alexander he built the ships perfect, beginning of evil, that were evil for all the Trojans, and for him too.

Colluthus follows Triphiodorus in choosing the same word order (Coll. νῆας Ἀλεξάνδρῳ δρυτόμῳ τεκτήνατο 199—Triph. νῆας Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τεκτήνατο 61), and thus preferring his arrangement to that of Homer, who placed νῆας after (Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τεκτήνατο νῆας 62); however, he returns to the Homeric model by re-employing the same adjective (Coll. ἀρχεκάκοιο 197-Hom. ἀρχεκάκους 63), which had been replaced by Triphiodorus with πήματος ἀρχήν, based on *Od.* 8.81 and *Il.* 6.282–3.[123] By bringing back both models to his readers' minds, Colluthus enhances the image of evil and trouble that is connected with Phereclus, the ships and Paris, suggesting the devastating consequences that lie ahead of this journey.

123 Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 168.

## 4 Visual Power and its Impact on the Characters

Much has been written about the importance of visuality in Greek culture,[124] and from various points of view: as a means of establishing status and reputation[125] and social role;[126] as a way of reading emotions hidden within;[127] and as an instrument to show off one's education.[128]

Characters' visual behaviour occupies a large portion of the body language described in the epyllion: they do a great deal of looking at each other (Helen and Paris) and at places (Paris' journey to Sparta), and they show off their appearance and looks (note the weight given to the description of the characters within the story; for instance, the parade of the gods arriving at Peleus and Thetis' wedding).

In addition, the behaviour of characters is on more than one occasion dictated by visual impact: thus Paris crowns Aphrodite as the winner since the sight of her nudity has had a more powerful impact on him than listening to Hera's and Athena's speeches;[129] the same can be said of Helen, who, mesmerised by Paris' beauty upon his arrival at her house, does not take long to decide to leave with him.[130] Characters act on the basis of what they see only, and no other criterion seems to play a role in their actions: Aphrodite sees (visual act) and wants the apple (for it represents a symbol of her superiority over the other goddesses), and this is what drives her to invest time in her toilette (enhancing what is visible: visual act) in order to impress (visual act) the judge and thus to win; Hermione does not see her mother, nor does she see the truth in what the maids tell her, and thus she informs Menelaus. In none of these scenes does logic or rationale play a part: for instance, Paris dismisses the long-term and substantial offers made by Hera (the Kingdom of Asia) and Athena (the gift of prowess) in favour of what looks best to him at the moment: a beautiful bride.[131]

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124 Hawley 1998, 93–96; Goldhill 1996.

125 Cairns 2005, 126.

126 Goldhill 1998.

127 Constantinidou 1994; Prier 1989; Elsner 2007.

128 Goldhill 2007, 18–19.

129 Harries 2006, 542.

130 Her decision is presented somehow ironically as dictated by her desire to see the glorious foundations laid by Poseidon and Apollo (310–313); see Combellack 1971, 49.

131 In Luc. *Dear. Iud.* 9, Paris refuses any responsibility for his decision, blaming his eyes only for the verdict: Ἓν τοῦτο, ὦ Ἑρμῆ, πεῖσον αὐτάς, μὴ χαλεπῶς ἔχειν μοι τὰς δύο τὰς νενικημένας, ἀλλὰ μόνων τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἡγεῖσθαι τὴν διαμαρτίαν, "Hermes, do me this one favour: persuade the goddesses who are defeated not to be angry with me, but to think that only my eyes have made a mistake".

A further observation relates to characters' awareness of visual power; they want and know how to impress, and they also know that visual impression is the key to success: this is true for Paris, who allows time to prepare himself before his meeting with Helen (he does not, for instance, invest in gifts to bring her) as it is for Aphrodite, whose toilette takes place ahead of the beauty contest.

It is also interesting that the story chosen by the poet is the root cause of the war at Troy, a trivial and shallow beauty contest, i.e. a purely visual competition. The visual impressions, looks, vanity and lust of a few lead to hardship, pain and death for the Greek cities and the Trojans and their allies: one may reasonably question whether such a superficial judgement was worth the toils of Troy.

Characters look at or away from other characters, they gaze or glance at them, they may look at them in certain ways that express (sometimes in conjunction with their body language) their inner emotions, like when Helen and Paris exchange erotic gazes. Equally, in a passive[132] approach, characters may see (i.e. witness) a phenomenon, like Paris sees the storm around his ship, and may thus find themselves in the passive position of being the unintentional viewers of something. In both these cases, visual behaviour affects other characters in the way they perceive the viewer. This two-way power relationship has psychological consequences that affect the way in which characters react. For instance, when Hermione looks everywhere for Helen, and when she wakes up from her deceitful dream, she reacts to these fruitless sights or visions with desperation and eventually with an action plan to recall her father.

Visual behaviour and the gaze also represent a powerful instrument[133] used by the poet to lead the reader's perception in one way or the other. Colluthus, as we have seen earlier when examining Paris' different roles and his transition from naivety to lawlessness, drives the reader's opinion towards a favourable-unfavorable assessment of the character, affecting the way in which the next scene is read and the overall story is eventually perceived. Glimpses of evaluation appear occasionally, revealing the poet's disapproval of Paris' greed, Aphrodite's lack of modesty and Helen's lack of compliance with her marital and motherly duties, or his sympathy with abandoned Hermione in a long and visually pathetic account of her abandonment.

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132 Concepts of active and passive viewing are based on Prévot 1935.

133 Lada-Richards 2003, 3–37 expands on the relationship between dance and sculpture, and how the two artistic means were used complementarily as a model. Viewers of both forms of art would study each other to learn how their visual impact could be enhanced.

### 4.1 *Paris' Journey to Sparta*

Paris' journey to Sparta (202–48), which occupies a considerable amount of space in the epyllion,[134] can be seen as a long digression, considering that it does not represent a crucial element within the plot. The episode is constructed as a very visual journey in which Paris, as well as the reader, (passively) sees many things that happen and appear along the way, and also actively looks at specific items.

The journey starts in the best possible way, with Paris paying tribute to Aphrodite with many sacrifices (203–4), and then setting off to sea on his way to Sparta on the Hellespont, but something visually striking happens.[135] An omen of his laborious toils appears to him τῷ δὲ πολυτλήτων σημήια φαίνετο μόχθων, "a presage of the troubles that will prove hard to endure" (206).[136] The linguistic passivity of this event is underlined by both the choice of φαίνομαι and σημήια, which is a mark or a sign by which a thing (or god) is known to the viewer. Paris has no escape from the sight of the omen, which, moreover, is not a view that he chooses or seeks. The obvious question that this decription suggests is whether Paris is able to avoid his destiny, and whether responsibility for the future events lies with him alone. Colluthus is quick to clear any doubt, clarifying at 298 that what happens is the work of Aphrodite.

Next, Colluthus describes with much precision a Mediterranean waterspout (206–10).[137] This detail is almost unique in Colluthus, as it is found only in two other versions of the myth: that of Dracontius, who, however, speaks of a storm which carries Paris to Cyprus (where he meets Helen),[138] and that of an ethopoiia of Severus of Alexandria, where, however, Menelaus is present, unlike in Colluthus.[139] Waterspouts are scientifically described as having an upward and rotatory motion;[140] Apollonius had already described a similar phenomenon,[141]

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134 Over one-eighth of the 394 lines.

135 See μέν (202) ... δέ (206).

136 On the prophetic nature of visions (in dreams) in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* see Auger 2003, 415 and 419 (on 48.298–9, where Aura is angry at herself for having had an erotic dream which was actually a premonition).

137 Giangrande 1975a, 36–37.

138 In Drac. *Carm.* 8.385 Paris is surprised by a storm on his way back from Telamon; he then ends up in Cyprus, where he meets Helen while Menelaus is in Crete. In Ovid *Her.* 16.223, Paris sails with favorable winds, see Rocca 1997, 175.

139 Sev. Alex. *Eth.* 3, on which see Amato and Ventrella 2009, 79–86.

140 *Encicl. Ital. s.v.* Trombe.

141 Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 2.169–173: ἔνθα μὲν ἠλιβάτῳ ἐναλίγκιον οὔρεϊ κῦμα / ἀμφέρεται προπάροιθεν ἐπαΐσσοντι ἐοικός, / αἰὲν ὑπὲρ λαιφέων ἠερμένον· οὐδέ κε φαίης / φεύξεσθαι κακὸν οἶτον, ἐπεὶ μάλα μεσσόθι νηός / λάβρον ἐπικρέμαται "Here the wave, similar to a steep mountain, rises

but Colluthus goes beyond this by specifying that the upward movements are rotatory (spirals). Moreover, waterspouts are normally accompanied by jets of water or spouts:[142] Colluthus describes these as well with ἀμιχθαλόεντος ἀπ' ἠέρος in 209.[143]

The scene that Paris and his companions have to face is striking: the black sea rises above and crowns the sky with a chain of dark spirals while a rainy storm pours down from the smoky air and the sea surges. The colours (κυανέη ... ὀρφναίων ... ἀμιχθαλόεντος 206–10) paint a dark picture for both fleet and readers, and they work as efficiently as the shapes and dynamics described by the poet: ὕπερθεν ἀναθρῴσκουσα ... ἑλίκων ἐζώσατο δεσμῷ ... ὄμβρον ἱεῖσα ... ἐκλύσθη δέ τε πόντος: there is a sea rising up, a chain of spirals in the sky, a rainy storm, and the scene is closed again by the image of the sea rising up (206–10). On the one hand, there is the θάλασσα (207) involved in the meteorological phenomenon; on the other hand, there is the πόντος (210), across which the sailors are rowing.[144] The image is vivid and frightening, and Paris and his companions are even more frightened,[145] as this is an unexpected event: before their departure they had made sacrifices to Aphrodite, the goddess who had sent them in the direction of Sparta and who was supporting Paris' union with Helen. Therefore, they were not expecting and could not predict that something like this would happen. The storm described by Musaeus is equally unexpected and terrifying (*Her.* 291–9):[146]

> Ἀλλ' ὀλίγον ζώεσκον ἐπὶ χρόνον οὐδ' ἐπὶ δηρὸν
> ἀγρύπνων ἀπόναντο πολυπλάγκτων ὑμεναίων.
> ἀλλ' ὅτε παχνήεντος ἐπήλυθε χείματος ὥρη
> φρικαλέας δονέουσα πολυστροφάλιγγας ἀέλλας,

in front of the sailors, and, as high as a cloud, seems to be falling down on them; you would think that you will not manage to escape the terrible fate, because it hangs as a threat right in the middle of the ship, but nonetheless it spreads if it meets an expert sailor".

142 Giangrande 1975a, 38.

143 Livrea 1968a, XLI, unsatisfied with the participle ἱεῖσα, suggested a rather absurd conjecture dismantled by Giangrande 1975a, 38–9, who notes how the use of the participle instead of a *verbum finitum* is an epic feature frequent from Homer to Musaeus.

144 Giangrande 1975a, 40 highlights the stylish use of synonyms in the same passage as an epic feature, imitating *Il.* 2.609–14, where, also, the sailors are ignorant of the matters of the sea (οὔ σφι θαλάσσια ἔργα μεμήλει), see Coll. 7–8.

145 The departure of the Argonauts is similarly accompanied by scenes of concern of their families in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 1.241–305.

146 The storm is also described at 309–18 during Leander's fatal crossing.

βένθεα δ' ἀστήρικτα καὶ ὑγρὰ θέμεθλα θαλάσσης
χειμέριοι πνείοντες ἀεὶ στυφέλιζον ἀῆται
λαίλαπι μαστίζοντες ὅλην ἅλα· τυπτομένην δὲ
ἤδη νῆα μέλαιναν ἐφείλκυσε διψάδι χέρσῳ
χειμερίην καὶ ἄπιστον ἀλυσκάζων ἅλα ναύτης.

But their life did not last long and they enjoyed their sleepless wandering love encounters for a short time. When the season of the cold winter came, which shakes the whirl with horrid storms, even the uncertain abyss and the wet floor of the sea hit the blow of the wild winds, and was beaten by the hurricanes in its whole extent. The sailors of both lands drove the black ships beaten by the waves, escaping the storm and the untrustworthy sea.

Colluthus tells us[147] that the omen serves as a sign of πολυτλήτων ... μόχθων (206), the future toils that will be many and hard to endure[148] as a consequence of this union.[149] The expression reminds us of the death of Leander, the other hero who also endured a frightful storm to join the object of his desire in Musaeus (*Her*. 329–30): καὶ δὴ λύχνον ἄπιστον ἀπέσβεσε πικρὸς ἀήτης / καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ ἔρωτα πολυτλήτοιο Λεάνδρου, "a bitter gust extinguished the light, unequal to his faith, and the soul and the love of much-enduring Leander". Toils and eros are necessarily joined, and the endurance of the storm can also symbolise the hardship that Paris will have to endure in the future. Paris' journey through the sea with his companions may also represent his rite of passage into manhood, as Jason and the Argonauts: a group experience which leads to new stages and responsibilities in life.[150] However, the poet does not tell us whether Paris and his companions realise what the storm means. The oarsmen continue to row throughout the apocalyptic scene (ἐρεσσομένων ἐρετάων 210): they do not, as one would expect, suddenly stop rowing to look in bafflement at the incredible

147 Readers are not required here to interpret whether the storm is just a natural phenomenon or an omen; in contrast, this identification is sometimes a challenge for readers of the Homeric poems (Bushnell 1982, 10–12).

148 Or that will prove hard to endure for many people, with a reference not only directly to Helen's and Paris' abandoned families (Oenone, Menelaus, Hermione), but especially to the multitude of people who died in the Trojan War.

149 Nonnus' metaphor of the deceitful waters in the episode of the legend of Tyre (*Dion*. 1.47–124), which evokes the stratagem performed by a god who disguises the waters (abduction of Europa, *Dion*. 16.51–5), has a proleptic function to anticipate the rapes of Nicaea (*Dion*. 16) and Aura (*Dion*. 48), perpetrated by means of false waters (Frangoulis 2014, 176–8).

150 Moreau 1994, 117–42.

scene. We should exclude that the men do not stop or seem to notice what is happening because the scene is not noticeable or striking enough to stop the action on the boat; if this were the case, the description would not be as remarkable and visually effective as it is. Perhaps Paris and his crew notice the incredible and sudden storm but decide to ignore it and keep rowing? This is possible: surprised by this inauspicious sign, Paris may just have decided to keep going on his journey: perhaps he did not even realise that the storm was actually an omen (he has been, after all, just a shepherd until now).[151] In sharp contrast, Ceres recognises many omens of her daughter's tragic abduction in Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina*, and she fears they may carry some truth: *Ah vereor, ne quid portendant omina veri!* (Claud. *Rapt.* 3.124–6, 132).

However, especially if we keep in mind that Paris is still the naive young shepherd that the poet has introduced earlier, one would imagine that he would have been even more frigthened than a noble prince (as he appears to be later on). Colluthus had also described him on more than one occasion as δειμαίνων (124, 127). If Paris is so easily frigthened, then why does he not fear the storm? Of course, Paris may feel confident about Aphrodite's support (λεχέων ἐπίκουρον ἐφεσπομένην Ἀφροδίτην 203). However, Paris had stopped to beautify himself before meeting Helen, a behaviour that can be interpreted as a sign of his lack of trust in Aphrodite's promise.

Moreover, one may question for what kind of audience the storm is written. Colluthus clearly states at the beginning of the passage that an omen (not just a storm) appears to him; thus readers are immediately informed that the natural scene that they are about to witness is not just a climatic circumstance but a token sent from the gods with a precise message and purpose. Paris and his companions may not know that, but readers do; with this knowledge, what readers see is not simply a sea storm but the Trojan War, with all the death and suffering that it will cause. The destructive force of the storm is then the destructive force of the war which is about to take place and which will lead to countless toils. Forced to visualise the double scene, readers watch and consider the consequences of Paris' union with Helen, and if they were positive and enthusiastic at the beginning of the journey, they are now perhaps questioning whether the lust of one man is worth the death and sacrifice of so many

151 Hector misreads bird signs especially in *Il.* 12 and 13: his tendency to secularise divine omens will contribute to his death, and he will ultimately become a bird sign, i.e. an omen of his own death (Bushnell 1982, 5–8); see also Pucci 1998, 71–75 on the apparent discrepant modalities of Athena's epiphany in *Il.* 1.194–8, where the goddess appears to Achilles from behind at 197 (thus implying that he could not see her), but she is visible to him alone (198).

innocent people. The darkness of the phenomenon, the circular movements of the sea and the smoky sky cannot allow a reader to remain emotionless and cannot fail to evoke thoughts of war, death and pain. With the ekphrasis of the omen, Colluthus provokes a reaction in his reader, if not in his characters (who seem oblivious to it).[152] Readers are the only party who can appreciate the full meaning of the storm, as they are the only ones who know that it is also a premonition. For one moment, then, narrator and readers share the knowledge of what is happening, while characters seem unaware of it.[153]

An ekphrasis can cause in readers feelings of sympathy or disagreement towards what is described,[154] and in this case the effects of the scene are twofold: positive feelings of sympathy, enthusiasm and support towards Paris' journey have been instilled in readers because of the sacrifices mentioned at 203–4, and also because of the triumphal speech made by Aphrodite, who questioned Paris (but also the readers) about what is more important than love. Aphrodite's words and beauty have persuaded both Paris and readers that she is the only one who truly deserves victory, and therefore that Paris' journey is not only legitimate but also necessary for Love to triumph above everything. Readers are thus embarking on this journey with Paris, supporting him. After witnessing the omen, however, their position may change; confronted with such an intense sight they are reminded of what that journey will ultimately lead to, and at this point, may switch to feelings of condemnation towards Paris. Another possible emotional reaction to the scene is the temptation to believe, even for just one moment, that events may actually have taken place in this manner: the poet substantiates and provides some fictional credibility to a parallel version of the truth, enticing readers into entertaining this possibility.

In fact, Colluthus had already offered readers more than one hint about the consequences of Helen's abduction: the references to the judgement of the goddesses as the primary cause of evil have already been highlighted,[155] and just before this episode, Colluthus had also described Paris as ill-fated, prey to desire under the influence of love, chasing a woman whom he had never even seen (193–4). Thus the Paris who starts gathering his companions for the expedition is an already unfortunate man, journeying to an ill fate, as well as a

152 Magnelli 2008, 159–62.

153 This gap in the knowledge of readers and characters is borrowed by Colluthus from the novel.

154 Bartsch and Elsner 2007, ii and iv explain how contrasting emotions can arise from an ekphrastic description, speaking of disobedient ekphrasis in the sense that readers may sympathise with what is described, but also feel an impulse to resist the fiction.

155 Lines 8, 10, 60, 62, 169, 191 and 197.

man who will be responsible for much misfortune to others; readers are almost awoken by the poet and reminded of what they already know, that war and pain lie ahead.

Perhaps, however, the war at Troy is not the only catastrophe symbolised by the waterspout. The introduction of this new landscape of destruction, in which everything will be swiped away, is in sharp contrast with the idyllic environment in which Paris was found earlier in the poem: the bucolic *locus amoenus* is now replaced by a stormy sea, where nothing is settled and calm as the tranquil bulls and un-barking dogs. Could this metereological disaster symbolise another death of bucolic poetry like the episode of the death of Hymnus in the *Dionysiaca*, which was interpreted as such by Harries 1994?

Webb[156] explained how the power to make something visible to readers (to make something absent present, to use her words), and to turn readers into almost viewers, is defined as *enargeia* (or realism) in manuals of rhetoric. It is through *phantasia* (impression)[157] and *enargeia* that orators are able to reach their audience's deepest emotions. He applies the concept to ekphrastic description, in which the writer may draw the reader into a passive experience, enslaving (not only persuading) him. This dazzling experience deprives the reader of any rationality and logic he may have: he is led away from facts and loses his critical ability. The reader becomes a viewer who is ultimately unable to rationalise.

This psychological effect of ekphrasis, which works almost as a spell when the orator or poet is *euphantasiotatos*, i.e. most skilled in affecting his audience through phantasia,[158] seems to be something with which Colluthus plays. In fact, earlier he persuaded his readers that Aphrodite's victory was completely deserved by dazzling them with the sight of her naked chest. Now that the readers are on board and eager to travel with Paris to meet the beautiful Helen, he breaks the fiction, (almost) bringing the readers back to reality and reminding them that this journey is only leading to a series of deadly consequences. Colluthus has first deprived his readers of their rationality, when, just as much as Paris, they were left speechless before the beautiful topless goddess, and now he shakes them out of their senses and pushes them to join him in an ethical judgement. From this perspective, this emotional process can be a rite of passage for the readers, intended by the poet to equal Paris' passage into manhood, as suggested earlier.

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156 Webb 2009b, 87–130; Goldhill 2007, 3–6; Newby 2002, 126–35.

157 Quintil. *Inst.* 6.2.29.

158 Goldhill 2007, 4; Webb 2009b; Quintil., as above.

This interpretation may work together with a Neoplatonic reading of Paris' sea-crossing: for Neoplatonic philosophers, the sea represents matter, thus the sensible world and evil,[159] and death in the sea is equivalent to death of the soul.[160] In our scene, Paris' journey may metaphorically represent the soul's journey across the temptations of matter, and the waterspout may allegorically represent the risks of material weaknesses, such as, in Paris' case, lust and greed. The fact that he ignores the dangers (i.e. the waterspout-omen) may mean that he rushes to meet his destiny unaware of the consequences. A similar interpretation has been suggested[161] for Musaeus' epyllion, where, at 269–70, Hero cleanses Leander of marine saltiness: the end of Leander's journey may symbolise the end of the soul's torment during its passage through the material world (i.e. the sea). On the other hand, there is no uncertainty about the Neoplatonic meaning of Claudian's *Gigantomachy* 30–32, where the Giant swallowing sea water symbolise his close relationship with matter, as the passage contains a clear reference to Porph. *Marc.* 33, p. 125, 19–21. Claudian's affinity with the circle of Neoplatonic Christian philosopher M. Theodorus, who was elected consul in Milan in 399, and for whom Claudian read a panegyric in the same year, is well known;[162] according to Livrea, Claudian composed his *Gigantomachy* the year after,[163] which makes such an interpretation almost impossible to refute. Claudian was one of Colluthus' main models, as we have seen; another of his main models was Christodorus, who also had affinities with Neoplatonism. Nonnus' awareness of Neoplatonic interpretations has long been known,[164] and a recent reading of his works provides new perspectives on, and insights into, the philosophical meaning of his images.[165] Given the relationship between Colluthus and his models, a Neoplatonic interpretation of the passage does not seem unreasonable.

159 For Porph. *Antr.* 34.11, the sea is ἡ ὑλικὴ σύστασις: he defines Odysseus' journey on the sea as an allegory of the soul's passage through the material world, and Tiresias' prophecy to him in *Od.* 11.122–3 as an allegory of the soul's exit from the sensible world and its return to its original place; Giomi 2003, 371–72. See also Porph. *VPlot.* 22.32–5 and Greg. Naz. *Carm.* 1.2.9.22–4.

160 Sin. *Ep.* 5.123–8.

161 Gelzer 1975, 316–22; Livrea 1976, 152–60 disagreed with this Neoplatonic interpretation.

162 Giomi 2003, 372.

163 Livrea 1998. For a summary of the discussion about the *Gigantomachy*'s dating see Giomi 2003, 361–62 and Tarigo 2012, 4–7.

164 Greco 2004, 15–28; Livrea 1989, 26–31; Vian 1976, XVIII.

165 Hernández de la Fuente 2014.

The next twenty lines include a geographical description of Paris' journey across Thrace and over to Achaea, approaching the south of Greece. Just past Mount Pangaeon, in Thracia, something else appears to Paris: Phyllis' tomb (213–18). Colluthus chooses a verb (ἔδρακε 214) that evokes Homeric ideas of snakes and piercing looks, but ironically in this case the object of Paris' look is just a grave, not a person (or an enemy!). The activity implied by δέρκομαι is lessened by the role assigned to the tomb itself as the viewed object: ἀντέλλοντα (214); as much as the viewer looks actively at the grave, so the object arises upon the viewer's horizon, i.e. it appears to him.

The myth of Phyllis[166] involves much visuality, and perhaps this is the reason why our poet chooses to place this particular story here: in both scenes a phenomenon appears to the main character. Phyllis had given a chest to Demophon, her husband, who was leaving her to go to Greece, and had asked him not to open it unless he decided not to return to her. In one version of the myth, told by the scholia ad Lycophron,[167] Demophon[168] opens the chest and is frightened by a φάσμα,[169] an apparition, or a phantom; he then falls with his horse and is impaled on his own sword. In this short digression an omen also appears to the viewer, a sign of death ahead, just like an omen had appeared to Paris; the character is forced by the poet to re-live and re-view what has just happened, perhaps as an ironic reminder of the toils that await him, although nothing is said about Paris' reaction to this second presage. This indirect comparison suggested by the mirror story of Phyllis fits in with the widespread presence of mythological paradigm in late-antique literature, which we see, for instance, in the content of ethopoiiai of both Christian and Biblical tradition.[170]

The scene is particularly affecting especially given the redundancy with which Colluthus insists on Phyllis' tragic story: firstly, the concept of wandering in vain, graphically described by δρόμον ἐννεάκυκλον ἀλήμονος … κελεύθου … διαστείχουσα … δεχνυμένη παλίνορσον … ὁππότε νοστήσειεν, then that of Phyllis' sadness: Φυλλίδος … φιλήνορος … κινύρεο, … ἀκοίτην ἀπήμονα (215–17). The

166 Gantz 1993, 701–2. In all versions of this myth, the death of Phyllis happens after the Trojan War (see Rocca 1997, 175); this slip in precision by Colluthus does not surprise us as he is not interested in presenting the events in chronological sequence.

167 *Schol. Lyc.* 495.54–63.

168 Here called Acamas, as in Aeschines (2.31) and in Lucian (*Salt.* 40).

169 Note the shared semantic root of φάσμα and φαίνετο, used at 206 to indicate the storm.

170 See, for instance, Nonnus' *syncrisis* including lists of mythological stories, as in the speech of Thetis to Chalcomedea in *Dion.* 33–35 discussed by Gerlaud 2005, 58–60 (where such monologues are defined as scholastic), 64–6, 70–2, 95–7, 104–106, and by Agosti 2004, 498–501, 504–17, 518–21, 530–1, 544–6, 562–71; see also Agosti 2005a, 43 and 48; Hunger 1969–1970, 21.

reader, and Paris with him, cannot help but picturing the distressed wife wandering the nine-circle course up and down, back and forth, desperately hoping to see her husband returning. The scene exercises a sort of emotional influence, generating from an inanimate object (the grave), on the viewers (Paris and the readers), and it reminds them of what has just happened in the previous scene (the omen) and also what is about to happen as a consequence (the Trojan War).

Just before the palace of Menelaus, Paris stops to observe the architectural beauties of Sparta, as Odysseus had done (after his similar bathing in the river before meeting Nausicaa) in *Od.* 7.43–5, where he had admired the tall walls of the city of the Phaeacians.[171] Dionysus had also admired the mosaics of Staphylus' palace in Nonn. *Dion.* 18.87–92.[172] Colluthus also inserts a digression about Hyacinth (240–8), which interestingly is also mentioned by Claudian in *Rapt.* 2.131–6.

Paris' interest in the Spartan buildings is unlikely and absurd for Combellack, and so is Helen's interest in the buildings that sit on foundations laid by Poseidon and Apollo.[173] However, there is a tradition that presents Paris as an accidental tourist.[174] In Lucian *Dear. Iud.* 15, Aphrodite sends Paris to Sparta on a sightseeing journey: Σὺ μὲν ἀποδημήσεις ὡς ἐπὶ θέαν τῆς Ἑλλάδος, "You will travel to Greece, as to visit it". Something similar happens in Ovid *Her.* 16.31–5[175] *nec me crede fretum merces portante carina findere—quas habeo, di tueantur opes. nec venio Graias veluti spectator ad urbes; oppida sunt regni divitiora mei. te peto, quam pepigit lecto Venus aurea nostro*, "Don't think I divided the waves with my ship carrying goods—the wealth I have the gods can keep. Nor have I come just to visit the towns of Greece: my kingdom's cities are far richer. I seek you, whom lovely Venus drives towards my bed",[176] where, in 131–32, Menelaus also gives Paris a guided tour of the city: *ille quidem ostendit, quidquid Lacedaemone tota ostendi dignum conspicuumque fuit*, "in fact he showed me whatever in all of Sparta is worthy and distinguished enough to be shown".[177] In Dictis of Crete (first century AD) 4.26, Paris is presented as

171 Neoptolemus also admires Sparta naively in *Od.* 4.43–7.
172 Nonnus also describes Thebes in *Dion.* 5.51, and Athens in 47.1.
173 Combellack 1971, 48.
174 Rocca 1997, 171–2.
175 Paschalis 2008, 140.
176 Trans. A.S. Kline.
177 Trans. A.S. Kline.

a real tourist who, during his journey through Sparta, meets Helen,[178] and in the *Vita Homeri* (probably end of second century AD), Paris is welcomed as a guest by Helen (in Menelaus' absence) during his journey to Greece, where he goes to learn about Greek culture. In Colluthus, Paris seems an aware and appreciative tourist if we assume that the poet relays what and how Paris sees without filtering it. Is this slightly ironic? He was, after all, a shepherd. One may wonder whether the beautiful landscapes and works of architecture are fully understood by their viewer, and whether this is yet another stage of his transformation in the visual hierarchy: from scrutinising the goddesses, he is now scrutinising the cities, perhaps applying the visual skills that he has learnt through his previous experience.

Colluthus makes sure to include both of the two main subjects of late-antique ekphrasis, man-made artworks and natural spectacles, first by making Paris go sightseeing around Sparta, and then making him witness the dramatic waterspout. His choice is well thought out and effective in fulfilling his contemporaries' poetic expectations in terms of popular genres.

### 4.2 *The First Encounter of Paris and Helen*

In the episode of Helen and Paris' first meeting (254–316) Colluthus plays with the phases and dynamics associated with scenes of this type, and with erotic phenomenology in general; inevitably, visual behaviour and the gaze play a key role in the communicative exchange between the two characters.[179]

Eros travels through the gaze, in Colluthus as well as in ancient culture in general.[180] Metaphysical and physiological studies of medical and philosophical nature,[181] as well as literary sources of all genres agree, through various theories, that the eye is the vehicle of erotic passion. The topos of love at first sight develops from these theories, initially with Hellenistic epic[182] and elegy, and then spreading to the novel and to a variety of genres including modern cinema. However, the novel is the genre that contributes the most in establishing this route as the necessary channel through which the structured process

178 Dictis was concerned with presenting a rationalised version of the story, in which all divine intervention was removed (Rocca 1997).

179 Harries 2006, 543.

180 Fusillo 1989, 196.

181 E.g. Epic. Fr. 31 Usener, Lucr. 4.1141–91, Pl. *Phaed.* 251ad. Also see Di Benedetto 1985, 145–156, and Foucault 1984, 139–141.

182 Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.253 and 275–90; Theocr. 2.82–6.

of falling in love occurs,[183] and also in re-elaborating the ancient concept of eros as a disease that affects both parties in the same way.

The eye plays a vital role in the ancient materialist optical theories[184] that substantiate the foundation of what, in the novel and in later literature, became the erotic-gaze theories. The emissionist theory[185] is based on the concept that the eyes emit rays towards the object of vision, as shown by the famous notion that the sun is an all-seeing eye;[186] this theory emphasises the active role of the eye versus what is viewed, and is widely displayed in early poetry[187] and tragedy.[188]

The first step towards interactionism, a theory according to which the eye not only emits effluences (active role) but is also the recipient (passive role) of emissions generated from the viewed object, is made by Empedocles,[189] whose theories have traditionally been interpreted as such[190] by Aristotle[191] and is thus aligned to what Plato expressed.[192] The Stoics' position, as well as that of Galen,[193] implies an equally interactionist relationship between the eye, which represents the vehicle of a πνεῦμα generated by the brain and directed at the object of vision, and the object itself. In contrast with the interactionist theories are Democritus and the atomists,[194] who believe in a purely passive role of the eye seen as the recipient of εἴδωλα generated by the viewed object. Aristotle's theory[195] involves the coloured object of vision affecting on a

183 Rousset 1984, especially 14–15 analysed the various phases involved in this process.

184 Dickie 1991, 26–28, Morales 2004, 15–18 and Cairns 2005, 138–39, include brief and clear summaries of these theories.

185 Theorised by Euclid, *Optics*, introd. axioms 1–7 and Alcmaeon of Croton A 5 DK.

186 Ar. *Thesm*. 17 ὀφθαλμὸν ἀντίμιμον ἡλίου τροχῷ; Anacreontea 26, Pind. *Paean*. 9, fr. 52k. 1–2 SM, Soph. *Tr*. 606.

187 In *Il*. 14.294 Zeus' seduction is described, *Od*. 4.150, 19.446; Hes. *Th*. 826–7; Sapph. fr. 31 LP (for a detailed analysis of Sapphic erotic language, see Lanata 1966), Pind. fr. 123.2–3 and 10–12 Snell.

188 Soph. *Aj*. 69; Eur. *Hipp*. 525–6; *Andr*. 1179–80; *Hec*. 367–8, 1104; *Her*. 130–2; regarding the role of the erotic gaze in tragedians, see Durup 1983, 143–149.

189 A 86 (especially Theophr. *Sens.* 7–8, 14, 18–19), B 84 DK; B 89, 109a DK.

190 However, some more recent interpretations emphasise the receptiveness of the eye versus its activity in Empedocles' theories, as noted by Cairns 2005, 138 n. 54.

191 Arist. *Sens*. 437b–438a.

192 Pl. *Tim*. 45bd and *Theaet.* 156ab.

193 Chrysipp. *SVF* 2.866 (see Goldhill 2002, 377); Gal. *Plac. Hipp. et Plat.* 7.5 (5.618–28K).

194 Democr. A 77, A 135 (Theophr. *De Sensu* 49–55), B 123 DK.; Leucipp. A 29–30 DK; Epic. *Ep*. 1.49–50; Lucr. *Rer. Nat*. 4.26–468.

195 Arist. *Anim.* 418a–419b, *Sens.* 437a–438b, 440a, and especially his example of the eye of a menstruating woman causing the discolouration of a mirror described in *Insomn.*

quality level both the transparent medium between object and viewer, and the eye itself: while he firmly rejects the theories of his predecessors, the remnants of those materialist ideals remain in his theory, too, since the qualitative change made on the medium and on the eye is still of material nature.

In an erotic context, emanationist theories apply to the eyes of the beloved issuing arrows or fire towards the lover, a common image in epigrams.[196] The activity aspect is present, as well expressed in epigrams such as Meleager *AP* 12.101.1–3,[197] where the very aware Mousey (the poet's beloved) takes ownership and brags about his conquest. However, the beloved does not always play an active part consciously but could unconsciously be spurring desire (although not actually emitting effluences) in the lover (who is receptive). Thus the situation may be one of unaware activity (or passive activity!), as for instance the one in which Paris finds himself in Eur. *IA* 584–6 ἐν ἀντωποῖς βλεφάροις ἔρωτά τ' ἔδωκας ἔρωτί τ' αὐτὸς ἐπτοήθης, "kindling love in Helen's entranced eyes and feeling its flutter in your own breast".[198]

Paradoxically, the lover may also end up being the victim of the beloved's gaze and surrender to the power of Eros, as in *AP* 12.199. In such scenarios, love becomes a passive experience for the helpless lover, in a curious twist of roles, as explained by Plato's Phaedrus.[199] Here, eros is explained as a physiological process involving ἀπορροαί from the body of the beloved entering their soul through the lover's eyes, thus causing the lover's desire.[200] This concept is beautifully expressed by Musaeus in *Her.* 92–95 κάλλος γὰρ περίπυστον ἀμωμήτοιο γυναικὸς / ὀξύτερον μερόπεσσι πέλει πτερόεντος ὀιστοῦ. / ὀφθαλμὸς δ' ὁδός ἐστιν· ἀπ' ὀφθαλμοῖο βολάων / κάλλος ὀλισθαίνει καὶ ἐπὶ φρένας ἀνδρὸς ὁδεύει, "the bright beauty of a chaste woman reaches mortals sharper than a winged arrow and eyes mark its path. From the glaring gaze beauty slips out and makes its way down to the man's heart". This almost medical theory is in line with the notion

459b27–460a26. See Cairns 2005, 139 n. 58. Also in Hel. *Aeth.* 10.14.7, a mother having intercourse in front of a picture of Andromeda is the cause of her daughter's pale skin.

196 Meleager *AP* 5.96, 12.63, 12.72, 12.106, 12.110, 12.144, Rhian. *AP* 12.93.9–10.

197 In two particularly interesting epigrams of Meleager, *AP* 12.109, Diodorus (the beloved) while busy emitting flames towards young men is in turn hunted by Timarius' greedy eyes, and 12.113, where Eros himself (the darting god par excellence) is captured by Timarius' eyes. In these cases, the active energy emanating from the beloved towards the lover is diverted by the effluences issued by another (unconscious) beloved.

198 Trans. E.P. Coleridge. See also Soph. fr. 474 R and Pind. fr. 123.204 SM.

199 Pl. *Phaedr.* 251bc; also in *Crat.* 420b.

200 Nonnus defines the eyes always as ὀχετηγοὶ ἐρώτων, love's "irrigation ditches", see Gigli-Piccardi 1985, 73–75, and Giomi 2003, 375.

that some diseases were transmitted by eyesight, such as ophthalmia and epilepsy,[201] and with the belief that eyes could be the vehicle of various affections, benign like eros, but also malicious ones.[202] This is the case of φθόνος (envy) and βασκανία (evil eye), a well-established superstition that Plutarch and Heliodorus sought to scientifically substantiate.[203] Cairns[204] identifies the main difference between the role of the eye in a context of eros and in a context of envy in the fact that the eye of the beloved, who spurs desire in his lover, does so in a passive or unaware manner, while the possessor of the envious eye is actively malicious and means to affect the other maliciously.[205] In fact, rays emitted by the eyes, which are the gazes of the mind in Neoplatonism, are fatal for the eyes' owners when they are directed in the wrong direction.[206]

When we are dealing with ἔρος, the emanationist theory applies best, as the lover's eye is a vulnerable recipient of the effluxes issued by the beloved's looks, which generates the pathos in the lover's soul. In the case of a malicious emotion (such as envy or the evil eye), the active emissionist theory applies, as it is the agent (i.e. the possessor of the envious eye) who is the victim of the pathos of the soul.[207]

The emanationist model[208] is the preferred scientific basis for the erotic process as presented by novelists. However, in novels the emissionist theory also plays a role in that the lover's eye, the passive recipient of the effluxes emanated by the beloved, is constantly hungry for the beautiful,[209] as in Heliodorus 7.75, where Chariclea spots Theagenes from a distance and is stung by his sight, and 7.7.7, where the same happens to Theagenes. Chariton states this clearly: ἔστι γὰρ ἴδιον ἔρωτος τὸ φιλόκοσμον, "it is characteristic of Love to indulge in display" (6.4.3), explaining how Love is the one instigating the desire

201 Hel. *Aeth.* 3.7.4; [Alex. Aphr.] *Probl.* 2.42. Theophr. *Char.* 16.14.

202 Resentment travels through the eyes of Medea in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 4.1669–73.

203 Plut. *Quaest. Conv.* 680f–81a; Hel. *Aeth.* 3.7.5; Dickie 1991 deals with the question whether Heliodorus depended on Plutarch, and on Heliodorus' ironic re-elaboration of Plutarch's passage.

204 Cairns 2005, 140–1.

205 For Neoplatonic interpretations of the sick or weak eye as a metaphor for the impure soul which cannot elevate to the knowledge of God see Giomi 2003, 366–67.

206 Giomi 2003, 371, on the interpretation of Claud. *Gig.* 21–22.

207 Plut. *Quaest. Conv.* 681ae. See Cairns 2005, 140–41.

208 Simon 1988.

209 Xen. *Symp.* 1.9–10, where Callias and the other onlookers are drawn to Autolycus, and none of them remained untouched by his beauty (τοῦ Αὐτολύκου τὸ κάλλος πάντων εἷλκε τὰς ὄψεις πρὸς αὐτόν· ἔπειτα τῶν ὁρώντων οὐδεὶς οὐκ ἔπασχέ τι τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπ' ἐκείνου); *AP* 5.100.2; Meleager *AP* 12.92; Hel. 1.2.5; Luc. *Imag.* 1.

to view the beloved in the lover: ὁ Ἔρως αὐτῷ … ἔνδον παρὼν καὶ λέγων "οἷον ἦν ἐνθάδε Καλλιρόην ἰδεῖν, "love entered the King's thoughts, whispering to him, 'How wonderful it would be to see Callirhoe here' " (6.4.5, trans. B.P. Reardon).

This two-way affection explains how the process of falling in love in the novel happens in a simultaneous and mutual manner, where each character is affected by the other's beauty. Although the eye of the beloved, even if dispassionate and unaware, has the power over the lover, and the eye of the lover is impotent, in the first-meeting scenario both parties undergo the same passive experience.[210] This is what happens, for instance, in Achilles Tatius, where the reciprocal glances generate εἴδωλα, and ἀπορροαί emanating from the beloved's body enter the soul of the lover through their eyes, generating a sea of affections.[211] The impressions received by each other's eyes are said here to be greater than τὰ ἔργα, intercourse itself.[212] A contemporary of Achilles, Clemens of Alexandria condemns wrong looking as sinful just as much as wrong acting (discussing idolatry), since worshipping a statue is considered by him short of copulating with it.[213] This condemnation continued in late antiquity, when the Fathers of the Church continued to promote puritanism against the open sexuality of certain pagan icons such as Aphrodite,[214] and took action to forbid the representation of pagan images, widely applying the charge of idolatry.[215]

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210 See Meleager's above-mentioned epigrams *AP* 12.109, 113 and 144. However, in these cases the emphasis is simply put on the swap of roles between beloved and lover (the beloved is tricked and becomes lover), not on the simultaneous and mutual falling in love.

211 Ach. Tat. 1.9.4–5 (Morales 2004, 130–5): this passage will be examined later in the chapter; 1.4.4–5 κάλλος γὰρ ὀξύτερον τιτρώσκει βέλους καὶ διὰ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν καταρρεῖ· ὀφθαλμὸς γὰρ ὁδὸς ἐρωτικῷ τραύματι. πάντα δέ με εἶχεν ὁμοῦ, ἔπαινος, ἔκπληξις, τρόμος, αἰδώς, ἀναίδεια, "For the wound of beauty is deeper than any wound, and it runs through the eyes down to the soul. The eye is the road through which the wound of love travels, and I now became a prey to a flock of emotions: admiration, amazement, trembling, shame, shamelessness"; also see Hel. 3.5.4–6.

212 Φαντασία is a Stoic technical term, which plays a critical role in Achilles Tatius' novel (Goldhill 2002, 377–9).

213 Clem. *Protr.* 4; see also *Nov. Test. Ev. Matth.* 5.28–9 πᾶς ὁ βλέπων γυναῖκα πρὸς τὸ ἐπιθυμῆσαι αὐτὴν ἤδη ἐμοίχευσεν αὐτὴν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ. εἰ δὲ ὁ ὀφθαλμός σου ὁ δεξιὸς σκανδαλίζει σε, ἔξελε αὐτὸν καὶ βάλε ἀπὸ σοῦ, "anyone who looks at a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. If your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you". See Goldhill 2002, 381–2.

214 Papagiannaki 2010, 321–2.

215 The supervised removal of pagan art from the ancient temples (allowed by the Theodosian Code in the fifth century AD) prevented the worship of pagan images, but also deprived such objects of their original religious meaning, thus making them works of art that could be aesthetically admired (and acquired) also by a Christian viewer: the Lausus Collection is a good example (Papagiannaki 2010, 324–6, 345).

How does Helen's and Paris' behaviour compare to the above-described processes of erotic physiology, then? Helen appears smitten from the very first moment she sees Paris: she begins by looking curiously at the godly doors, and as soon as she sees him, she invites him to sit on a precious seat (254–9). The very first response of Helen to the sight of the beautiful stranger says much about her, and the speed with which she acts implies that the sight of Paris has struck her:

> ἡ δὲ φιλοξείνων θαλάμων κληῖδας ἀνεῖσα
> ἐξαπίνης Ἑλένη μετεκίαθε δώματος αὐλὴν
> καὶ θαλερῶν προπάροιθεν ὀπιπεύουσα θυράων
> ὡς ἴδεν, ὣς ἐκάλεσσε καὶ ἐς μυχὸν ἤγαγεν οἴκου
> καί μιν ἐφεδρήσσειν νεοπηγέος ὑψόθεν ἕδρης
> ἀργυρέης ἐπέτελλε·
>
> And Helen unlocked the bolts of her hospitable home, and suddenly came to the court of the house, and, staring in front of the thick doors, as soon as she saw him, so soon she called him and led him to the heart of the house. And she told him to sit on a silver chair that had recently been made.

The immediacy with which Helen is stung by eros represents a standard phase of the process as described especially in the novel,[216] where the two young protagonists usually meet and instantly are hypnotised by each others' eyes, as in Ach. Tat. 1.4.4 ὡς δὲ εἶδον, εὐθὺς ἀπωλώλειν.[217] Theocritus *Id*. 3.42 ὡς ἴδεν, ὣς ἐμάνη, ὣς ἐς βαθὺν ἅλατ' ἔρωτα is revived by Nonnus to describe how Hymnus falls in love with Nicaea and to alert readers "to the different sexual ethics of the *Dionysiaca*" at 4.209.[218] The motif, however, was not new: in *h.Aphr*. 56–7, Aphrodite sees Anchises and is instantly besotted with him τὸν δὴ ἔπειτα ἰδοῦσα φιλομμειδὴς Ἀφροδίτη / ἠράσατ', ἐκπάγλως δὲ κατὰ φρένας ἵμερος εἷλεν. Medea also falls in love very quickly with Jason at the temple of Hecates once she is struck by eros' darts in Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 3.285–98.

It is worth considering further the timing of Helen and Paris' process of falling in love. Paris had been prey to desire since before their meeting and had been pursuing "the one whom he had not even seen" (193) because Aphrodite

216 Létoublon 1993, 118; Fusillo 1989, 197–9; Rousset 1984, 14–15 and chapter 8.

217 Chariton 1.1.6 ταχέως οὖν πάθος ἐρωτικὸν ἀντέδωκαν ἀλλήλοις, and Heliodorus 3.5.4 ὁμοῦ τε γὰρ ἀλλήλους ἑώρων οἱ νέοι καὶ ἤρων.

218 The Hymnus episode contains many allusions to Theocritus' *Idylls* (Hadjittofi 2008, 119–22).

had described her to him as a lovely bride (164). He himself admits that he has heard of her reputation (294–5).[219] In novels, characters' fame can drive desire for each other even before they meet,[220] as occurs in Xenophon Ephesius 1.2, where Anthia and Habrocomes long to meet after they learn about each other's reputation (Habrocomes, as will happen with Paris later, is compared to a god for his beauty). The process is well explained in Ach. Tat. 2.13.1–2:

> οὗτος ἀκούων τὴν Σωστράτου θυγατέρα εἶναι καλήν, ἰδὼν δὲ οὐδέποτε, ἤθελεν αὐτῷ ταύτην γενέσθαι γυναῖκα … τοσαύτη γὰρ τοῖς ἀκολάστοις ὕβρις, ὡς καὶ τοῖς ὠσὶν εἰς ἔρωτα τρυφᾶν καὶ ταῦτα πάσχειν ἀπὸ ῥημάτων, ἃ τῇ ψυχῇ τρωθέντες διακονοῦσιν ὀφθαλμοί … ἀναπλάττων γὰρ ἑαυτῷ τῆς παιδὸς τὸ κάλλος καὶ φανταζόμενος τὰ ἀόρατα ἔλαθε σφόδρα κακῶς διακείμενος.
>
> He heard people speak of Sostratus' daughter as a beautiful woman, and, although he had never seen her, on this basis alone he wanted her for his wife … Such is the audacity of men with no self-control on them! They can fall in love with a rumor and suffer with their ears the agonies usually experienced by the soul from love's wounds in the eye … By indulging phantasies of her beauty for himself and forming an impression of the unseen, he sank by imperceptible degrees into a miserable state.

In Lucian, Paris is also so charmed by Helen before he has seen her that he thinks he can see her: πλὴν ἐρῶ γε ἤδη τῆς Ἑλένης καὶ οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως καὶ ὁρᾶν αὐτὴν οἴομαι, "but I am already in love with Helen and I do not know how but I think I see her" (*Dear. Iud.* 15). The key to understanding Paris' desire for Helen is precisely in those φαντασίαι mentioned by Achilles Tatius, the same ones that Clitophon, in 1.9.1, mentions to his cousin Clinias: πάντοτε Λευκίππην φαντάζομαι, "impressions of Leucippe face me all the time."[221] In Ovid, Paris tells Helen of how he has been affected by her fame (*Her.* 16.35–8):[222]

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219 Instead, Helen develops feelings of desire for him (Πάριν ποθέουσα 278) only after seeing him.

220 Larran 2011, 26–30; Schmeling 2005, 36–49; Fusillo 1989, 198. See also Hardie 2012.

221 Goldhill 2002, 377–8 highlights how the passage expresses Stoic theories, which privileged viewing as the access to knowledge of the world. As noted earlier, φαντασία and φαντάζομαι are technical terms in Stoic and other materialist ocular theories, and define the impact which, in the form of impressions, the external world has on the viewer. The same concept is also expressed in Chariton 6.4.7 ταῦτα ἀναζωγραφῶν καὶ ἀναπλάττων ἐξεκαίετο σφόδρα "Painting this scene in his imagination, the King burned with passion" (trans. B.P. Reardon).

222 At 133–48 Ovid emphasises further that Helen's reputation is surpassed by her actual beauty to the point that, if she had been competing with the goddesses, Aphrodite's

*te peto, quam pepigit lecto Venus aurea nostro*;
*te prius optavi quam mihi nota fores*.
*ante tuos animo vidi quam lumine vultus*;
*prima tulit vulnus nuntia fama tui*.

You are whom I seek, whom lovely Venus drives towards my bed:
I wished for you before you were known to me.
Your face was in my mind before I saw you with my eyes:
news of your fame first brought me the wound.

Reputation, then, as well as the sight of the beloved's beauty, can also create impressions in the lover's soul, and these can drive desire.

Helen's first reaction is to immediately invite the stranger into her house. Seeing Paris and calling him inside are in fact contemporaneous (ὡς ἴδεν, ὣς ἐκάλεσσε 257); Helen leads Paris into the heart of the house (257), and then sits him on a silver chair that has recently been made (νεοπηγέος ὑψόθεν ἕδρης ἀργυρέης 258–9). The reader can immediately see the effects of the sight of beauty on her by her search for a contact. In the two famous precedents of the scene, the heroines behave in a similar way: Penelope had Odysseus (still disguised as a beggar) sit on a well-polished chair covered in fleeces (*Od*. 19.97–102), while Medea reached for Jason's hand in Apollonius (*Arg*. 3.1067–8). In Heliodorus, too, Chariclea hands a torch over to Theagenes as soon as they meet: τὴν δᾷδα ὁλκότερον ἡ μὲν ἐνεχείριζεν ὁ δὲ ὑπεδέχετο, *Aeth*. 3.5.5.

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success would have been questionable: *sed mihi laudatam cupienti cernere formam / lumina nil aliud quo caperentur erat. / ut vidi, obstipui praecordiaque intima sensi / attonitus curis intumuisse novis. / his similes vultus, quantum reminiscor, habebat, / venit in arbitrium cum Cytherea meum. / si tu venisses pariter certamen in illud, / in dubium Veneris palma futura fuit. /magna quidem de te rumor praeconia fecit, / nullaque de facie nescia terra tua est; / nec tibi par usquam Phrygia nec solis ab ortu / inter formosas altera nomen habet! / credis et hoc nobis?—minor est tua gloria vero / famaque de forma paene maligna tua est / plus hic invenio, quam quod promiserat illa, / et tua materia gloria victa sua est*, "But I desired to see your much-praised beauty, there was nothing else that could captivate my eyes. When I saw you, I was stunned, and, astonished, I felt new love swell in my deepest heart. As far as I could remember, you had such looks as when Cytherea came to me for judgement. Equally, if you'd been in that competition, Venus winning the palm would have been in doubt. Fame in fact has greatly commended you, and no land is ignorant of your beauty. No other beauty has a name like yours, anywhere from Phrygia to the place the sun rises! Do you trust me in this?—Your fame is less than the truth and fame's almost unkind to your beauty. I find more here than she promised me, and your reality exceeds your fame" (trans. A.S. Kline).

Helen is instantly affected by eros through vision and rushes to bring Paris into her own personal space, eager to find out more about the beautiful stranger; she wants to question him about his ancestors and his origin, just as Penelope wanted to ask Odysseus questions (ἐθέλω δέ μιν ἐξερέεσθαι *Od.* 19.99).

The next phase of Paris and Helen's meeting involves staring and recognition, two standard stages in scenes of lovers' first encounter, codified by the novel in particular.[223] Helen seeks to find something familiar in him; she searches his appearance hoping to recognise someone she knows. I have mentioned earlier how the eye of the lover is constantly hungry for the beautiful: we now find that Helen cannot satisfy her eyes with gazing (κόρον δ' οὐκ εἶχεν ὀπωπῆς 259). Once emanations of the beloved's beauty have travelled through the eyes into the lover's soul, emotions begin to flow inside and staring becomes the vehicle through which they show on the outside, beginning with ἔπαινος, the admiration mentioned by Achilles Tatius 1.4.5, where Clitophon admits: τοὺς δὲ ὀφθαλμοὺς ἀφέλκειν μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς κόρης ἐβιαζόμην· οἱ δὲ οὐκ ἤθελον, ἀλλ' ἀνθεῖλκον ἑαυτοὺς ἐκεῖ τῷ τοῦ κάλλους ἑλκόμενοι πείσματι, καὶ τέλος ἐνίκησαν. "My eyes defied me. I tried to force them away from the girl, but they swung back to her, drawn by the allure of her beauty, and finally they won". Like Helen, Chloe also stares at Daphnis, captivated by his beauty (Long. 1.24.1): ἡ μὲν γὰρ γυμνὸν ὁρῶσα τὸν Δάφνιν ἐπ' ἄθρουν καὶ ἐνέπιπτε τὸ κάλλος, "Chloe, seeing Daphnis naked, was lost in gazing at his beauty".

Staring is probably the most intense pleasure that lovers can achieve before intercourse in the generic codes of the novel; however, in the erotic visual language of antiquity this translates into an even superior pleasure. The scientific explanation for this is given by Achilles Tatius 1.9.4–5:

> οὐκ οἶδας οἷόν ἐστιν ἐρωμένη βλεπομένη· μείζονα τῶν ἔργων ἔχει τὴν ἡδονήν. ὀφθαλμοὶ γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἀντανακλώμενοι ἀπομάττουσιν ὡς ἐν κατόπτρῳ τῶν σωμάτων τὰ εἴδωλα· ἡ δὲ τοῦ κάλλους ἀπορροή, δι' αὐτῶν εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν καταρρέουσα, ἔχει τινὰ μίξιν ἐν ἀποστάσει· καὶ ὀλίγον ἐστὶ τῆς τῶν σωμάτων μίξεως· καινὴ γάρ ἐστι σωμάτων συμπλοκή.
>
> You have no idea how marvellous a thing is when a lover is looked at. It is a greater pleasure than the Business. For the eyes receive each other's reflections, and impress from there little images as in mirrors. Such an emanation of beauty, flowing down through them into the soul, is a kind

223 Létoublon 1993, 106–114.

> of copulation at a distance. This is not far from the intercourse of bodies. For it is a novel kind of embrace of bodies.

Helen's hungry eyes at the sight of Paris make sense at a time of voyeuristic *scopophilia* such as late antiquity.[224] As we have already seen, Nonnus indulged in detailed descriptions of erotic fascination, rapes and wounded bodies: see, for instance, the lengthy descriptions of Hymnus staring at Nicaea's body in *Dion.* 15.220–54, and of the Indian staring at the dead Bassarid in 35.37–43.

Besides the erotic nature of Helen's looking in terms of pleasure versus the sexual act itself, some considerations can be made regarding the context of gazing and the gender of the viewer. Hawley deals with the male body as the object of the gaze of both the audience and other characters.[225] I have discussed earlier on which exceptional occasions it was considered acceptable for the male body (or corpse) to be looked at. For female viewers, it was considered acceptable to gaze at men only in certain contexts, for example when the gaze was not one of erotic desire,[226] and in situations of disguise,[227] with the consequences described by Hawley,[228] i.e. that masculinity is only expressed/-able by female characters in tragedy as an inner quality[229] (such as strength or courage), and femininity by male characters only as exterior attributes[230] (such as the garments or the movements). This is all in line with Aristotelian theories that masculinity is stronger and femininity is weaker; with social conventions of the fifth century BC, according to which females are second class; and with audiences being composed of all male spectators, mainly Athenians, and of various social classes. In the context of erotic gazing, the female gaze was generally avoided by male characters as threatening, as we have seen in the case of Euripides' *Hippolytus Calyptomenos*, who veiled his head not only (as traditionally interpreted) because he was seeking to avoid religious pollution, but also, in light of recent theories, because he did not want his masculinity to be threatened by Phaedra's look of desire. Hawley contrasts Hippolytus to Odysseus, who, although beautified by Athena before his meeting with Nausicaa (a female viewer) in *Od.* 6.223–35, is not feminised, nor is

224 Harries 1994, 65, Agosti 2006b, 352.
225 Hawley 1998.
226 For instance in the case of Euripides' Medea, who considers it a wife's duty to look at her husband's soul (*Med.* 247), see Hawley 1998, 90.
227 As in Aesch. *Choe.* 563–4; see Hawley 1998, 90–1.
228 Hawley 1998, 85–95.
229 As Aeschylus' Clytaemnestra.
230 As Agathon in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae*.

his masculinity threatened at any stage; therefore, in epic poetry there was no serious concern about gender as there was in the fifth century BC.

What about Paris? Is he feminised through the scenes of his toilette, his beauty glorified by the poet's compliment, and especially now, under the scrutiny of Helen's gaze? As seen earlier, Paris' masculinity does not appear to be jeopardised by any of the feminine features about which he is so vain (the hair that he does not want the wind to ruffle, the feet that he does not want to dirty, his pastoral attire) nor by Helen's look, although he is unquestionably the object of her gaze and not vice versa. On the contrary, he seduces Helen precisely because his beauty is feminised, just as Cadmus seduced Aphrodite/Peisinoe and Harmonia in Nonn. *Dion* 4.[231] Paris' beauty is the indisputable object of desire here, while the notion of her beauty reaches him only through her reputation via Aphrodite. This represents a radical twist on classical tradition, in which Helen's beauty was normally the object of the gaze and desire of men; however, from Hellenistic times onwards, differentiation in the viewer's gender seems to have disappeared: Medea looks straight into Jason's eyes (ἀνέδρακεν ὄμμασιν ἄντην, *Arg*. 3.1010), and for a long time.[232] In the novel, females gaze as much as males, which shows that there is no longer a boundary between genders in terms of who should be the object of the gaze and who should do the looking: in Longus, for instance, both Daphnis and Chloe look at each other at various stages, as in 1.24.1–2.

A further consideration links, once again, our Paris to Apollonius' Jason: firstly, he happily plays a secondary role as the acquisition of the Golden Fleece is mainly achieved with the aid of Medea's magical powers, and when the Fleece is attained, his delight is compared to that of a πάρθενος who sees the full moon caught in her fine dress (*Arg*. 4.167–73). As Hunter noted, *rites de passage* often involve sexual reversal, and it is paradoxical that, precisely at the time of Jason's biggest achievements (the Fleece and Medea), he is compared to a young girl to mark his transition into manhood. Apollonius' Jason is at a crucial transitional stage: "halfway between Apollo, the model kouros, and

231 Frangoulis 2006, 45–50.

232 Medea looks at beautiful Jason throughout the whole scene (956–1162), and she also shows the physical Sapphic symptoms of love: her heart misses a beat, her vision is blurred, she blushes (962–965 and 1009–10). For a focussed analysis of the nature of their visual interaction see Cairns 2005, 132–33. For some similarities between the magical behaviours of Medea and Helen see Roisman 2006 and Clauss 1997.

the war-god Ares (*Arg*. 3.1282–3)".[233] Colluthus' Paris, a multifaceted character, does not suffer from either of these less-than-masculine attributes.

The desire for a lover's gaze is closely connected to the next motif: recognition (ἀναγνώρισις). In Hel. *Aeth*. 3.5.4–5, the prophet Calasiris explains the reasons why two souls seek to find something familiar in the other's features:

> ὥσπερ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐκ πρώτης ἐντεύξεως τὸ ὅμοιον ἐπιγνούσης καὶ πρὸς τὸ κατ' ἀξίαν οἰκεῖον προσδραμούσης. Πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ἀθρόον τι καὶ ἐπτοημένον ἔστησαν … τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἀτενεῖς ἐπὶ πολὺ κατ' ἀλλήλων πήξαντες ὥσπερ εἴ που γνωρίζοντες ἢ ἰδόντες πρότερον ταῖς μνήμαις ἀναπεμπάζοντες
>
> As if the soul recognised its kin at the very first encounter and rushed to meet that which was worthily its own. For a brief second full of emotion they stood motionless … and while they gazed hard into each other's eyes, as if remembering whether they had previously met somewhere or seen each other before.

According to Dickie, Heliodorus' passage owes much to Platonic theories (*Phaedr*. 249d-253c), according to which the soul fell due to the weight of men's corruption but gained wings again, once men got in touch with the beauty emanated by a boy.[234] The soul then remembers the time when it was in touch with truth, experiencing Sapphic symptoms (fr. 31 LP) of erotic turmoil such as blushing, pallour, dismay, obsession and not being able to live apart from that person, who has become its means of returning to the divine.[235] This is why the two lovers recognise (or seek to recognise) themselves from an obscure past, rather than knowing each other for the first time. Beauty is then the ennobling means that spurs a memory of the divine in the lover, and in Heliodorus these Neoplatonic concepts are expressed clearly.[236] Heliodorus also codifies the process of falling in love as a result of divine predestination, highlights the Sapphic symptoms in the so-called phase of exchange[237] between the two

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233 Hunter 1988, 451–3. On war-like Jason, see especially 442.

234 Dickie 1991.

235 Fusillo 1989, 199–200.

236 Hel. *Aeth*. 1.4, 3.45.4 and 5.7; see Giomi 2003, 374.

237 Rousset 1984, chapter 6 (especially, 120) defines as "exchange" the phase in which the two lovers throw signals at each other, such as making a spectacle of themselves: for instance, Anthia (in Hel. *Aeth*. 1.3.1–2) offers as much as it is possible of her body for Habrocomes

lovers,[238] and more importantly, updates Plato's theory by applying it to female beauty.[239]

Colluthus does not put Helen through all the visible Sapphic symptoms of eros, although she is stunned and shy (267), and her inner turmoil shows through her visual behaviour. Later, she picks up courage (θαρσήσασα 307 and οὐ τρομέω 316) and addresses Paris again as a stranger (but this time using the epic model of the vocative preceded by ὦ),[240] as Hero insistently does with Leander in Mus. *Her*. 123, 174, 178 and 181. Her staring and immediate attempt to recognise the stranger can thus be translated as her soul recognising the person who is able to reconnect her to the divine; what is more, her own process of falling in love is also predestined by Aphrodite, as happens in Heliodorus, where the union of Chariclea and Theagenes is also schemed by the goddess and inserted into a ritual context (Chariclea hands over to Theagenes the torch to set the sacrificial fire).

At first Helen believes that she is looking at Eros, and then she realises that it is not him; then, she sees no quiver of arrows and keeps searching Paris' beautiful face with her eyes, seeking to see Dionysus (260–6):

ἄλλοτε δὴ χρύσειον ὀισαμένη Κυθερείης
κοῦρον ὀπιπεύειν θαλαμηπόλον—ὀψὲ δ' ἀνέγνω,
ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν Ἔρως· βελέων δ' οὐκ εἶδε φαρέτρην—
πολλάκι δ' ἀγλαΐῃσιν ἐυγλήνοισι προσώπων
παπταίνειν ἐδόκευε τὸν ἡμερίδων βασιλῆα·
ἀλλ' οὐχ ἡμερίδων θαλερὴν ἐδόκευεν ὀπώρην
πεπταμένην χαρίεντος ἐπὶ ξυνοχῇσι καρήνου.

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to see, forgetting what the appropriate costumes for a virgin like her are (see also Fusillo 1989, 198–99).

238 Hel. *Aeth*. 3.5.5–6 εἶτα ἐμειδίασαν βραχύ τι καὶ κλεπτόμενον καὶ μόνῃ τῇ διαχύσει τοῦ βλέμματος ἐλεγχόμενον. Ἔπειτα ὥσπερ καταιδεσθέντες τὸ γεγονὸς ἐπυρρίασαν, καὶ αὖθις, τοῦ πάθους οἶμαι καὶ τὴν καρδίαν ἐπιδραμόντος, ὠχρίασαν, καὶ ἁπλῶς μυρίον εἶδος ἐν ὀλίγῳ τῷ χρόνῳ τὰς ὄψεις ἀμφοῖν ἐπεπλανήθη καὶ μεταβολὴ παντοία χροιᾶς τε καὶ βλέμματος τῆς ψυχῆς τὸν σάλον κατηγοροῦσα, "Then they smiled a fleeting, furtive smile, discernible only as a slight softening of their expressions. And then they blushed, as if they were embarrassed at what had occurred, and a moment later—I suppose as their passion touched their hearts—the colour drained from their faces. In short, in the space of an instant, an infinity of expression passed across both their faces, as every imaginable alteration in complexion and countenance bore witness to the waves that pounded their souls" (trans. J.R. Morgan).

239 Plato never admitted this as a possibility (Plut. *Amatorius* 766ef).

240 Giangrande 1969, 153 allies to Helen's newly found courage the use of this specific Homeric (Giangrande 1968) module, not used by him before at 268.

> Now convinced to be looking at the golden boy who attends on Cytherea, and then realised that it was not Eros: she did not see a quiver of arrows—and more than once she searched with her eyes his beautiful face and bright eyes, to see the king of vine. But she did not manage to spot any swollen fruit of the vine, spread upon his well proportioned gracious head.

In the space of a few lines we have multiple references to eyesight again, highlighting the intensity of her gaze, which is both inquisitive and full of desire. Ὀπιπεύω alludes to Helen's curious, spying gaze; ἀναγιγνώσκω excludes all possibilities of a recognition of Eros; παπταίνω adds a touch of fear in her eyes; δοκεύω goes back to the inquisitive look. Helen's emotional turmoil is made visible to readers through the nature of her various glances, and visual behaviour here displays on the outside the emotions that the woman is experiencing on the inside: curiosity, desire to recognise, fear.

The famous antecedent of this recognition scene is Penelope, who hesitated for a long time when she faced Odysseus upon his return in *Od.* 23.93–5:

> ἡ δ' ἄνεω δὴν ἧστο, τάφος δέ οἱ ἦτορ ἵκανεν·
> ὄψει δ' ἄλλοτε μέν μιν ἐνωπαδίως ἐσίδεσκεν,
> ἄλλοτε δ' ἀγνώσασκε κακὰ χροῒ εἵματ' ἔχοντα

> She sat for a long time in silence, wonder filled her chest; looking at him, at times she recognised him clearly, at times she did not, covered in rugs as he was.

Another very visual scene of ἀναγνώρισις is in Euripides, where Menelaus struggles to believe what he sees, and Helen challenges the truth that comes from sight.[241]

241 Eur. *Hel.* 557–80 τίς εἶ; τίν' ὄψιν σήν, γύναι, προσδέρκομαι; / [...] Ἑλένηι σ' ὁμοίαν δὴ μάλιστ' εἶδον, γύναι / [...] οὔ που φρονῶ μὲν εὖ, τὸ δ' ὄμμα μου νοσεῖ; / [Ελ.] οὐ γάρ με λεύσσων σὴν δάμαρθ' ὁρᾶν δοκεῖς; / [Με.] τὸ σῶμ' ὅμοιον, τὸ δὲ σαφές γ' ἀποστατεῖ. / [Ελ.] σκέψαι· τί σοι δεῖ πίστεως σαφεστέρας; / [Με.] ἔοικας· οὔτοι τοῦτό γ' ἐξαρνήσομαι. / [Ελ.] τίς οὖν διδάξει σ' ἄλλος ἢ τὰ σ' ὄμματα; "Who are you? What a strange vision I see before my eyes! [...] I look at you, woman: you look exactly like Helen! [...] How is it possible that I can think clearly and yet I see hallucinations? {Hel.} Look at me. Do you not realise that you have your wife in front of you? {Men.} Indeed you do look like her, and yet evidence stops me from believing you. {Hel.} Look harder: what other evidence do you want? Who can know me better than you? {Men.} Yes, you do look like her, I am not denying that. {Hel.} If you do not believe your eyes, what would you believe?"

Helen seeks to recognise one of the gods through her memory of paintings or sculpture, as occurs with Anchises in *h.Aphr*. 92–9, where the hero wonders whether the beautiful lady he is beholding (Aphrodite) is Artemis, Leto, Aphrodite, Themis, Athena or one of the Graces. On this occasion Aphrodite candidly lies about her identity, claiming that she is not a goddess but a mortal, so that he will be reassured about whom he is about to join (109–10). Another interesting model is Nonn. *Dion*. 4.77–176, in which Aphrodite, disguised as Peisinoe, seeks to persuade Harmonia to marry Cadmus by pretending to recognise in him many gods (a mortal, a god, Hermes, Apollo); however, Nonnus is here applying to Cadmus steterotypes which are usually associated with female characters, such as the comparison with a god and with a statue, and the formulas that he employs to describe his hair, feet, face and voice are all reminiscent of female heroines from the novel genre.[242]

Interestingly, the two divinities of whom Helen is thinking when looking at the stranger in the *Abduction* are Eros himself, the one who is possessing her right now, and Dionysus, the god to whom Colluthus had compared Paris for his beauty just before his arrival (251–3). Both gods are associated with the mysterious effects of divine power on mortal life, particularly in human minds and emotions;[243] with this choice, Colluthus may therefore have wished to underline the impact made by both gods on his heroine.

The fact that Helen also mistakes Paris for Dionysus reinforces Colluthus' evaluation and makes the association with the god even stronger. The poet had also hinted at Dionysus as a model of beauty earlier, where he had alluded to the god while describing Apollo's Bacchic hairstyle with the term βότρυς in 26.[244]

242 Frangoulis 2006, 45–46.

243 This influence is predominant and recurrent in the novel, see Reardon 1989, 303 n. 26.

244 Colluthus' model is Apollo as he appeared to the Argonauts who had just arrived in the Thyniade island in Ap. Rh. 2.676–7 χρύσεοι δὲ παρειάων ἑκάτερθεν / πλοχμοὶ βοτρυόεντες ἐπερρώοντο κιόντι· "and about his cheeks on both sides his golden locks flowed in clusters as he moved" (trans. R.C. Seaton). He mixes the Apollonius model with a metaphor based on the expression βότρυς … χαίτης based on Nonn. *Dion*. 1.528 βαθυσμήριγγος ἀλήμονα βότρυν ἐθείρης, "a straying curl of her thick hair". In 12.179 Nonnus reveals the etymological game when he describes Ampelus' metamorphosis, which also involved that βόστρυχα βότρυες ἦσαν, "the clusters of his hair were bunches of grapes". Colluthus also contaminates this metaphor with *Dion*. 18.12, where the name Botris alludes to a town in modern Lebanon (Batroun), near to which an inscription was found, attesting to a cult of Dionysus Botri on the Pangaeon Mountain (Chuvin 1991, 196). See also the description of two statues of Apollo in Christ. *AP* 2.268–9 εἶχε γὰρ ἀμφοτέροισι κόμης μεμερισμένον ὤμοις / βόστρυχον αὐτοέλικτον and 284–5 πλόκαμος γὰρ ἕλιξ ἐπιδέδρομεν ὤμοις / ἀμφοτέροις. See also Triph. 82–3 for a comparison of hair with a vine (Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 179).

The god is associated with aggressive eros, like Pan.[245] In the *Symposium*, Xenophon describes a dance at the dinner party in which the god is mimed as he seats Ariadne on his lap, kisses and caresses her, while she can barely keep her composure (*Symp*. 9.3–7). Dionysus is also presented as a model for beauty in Longus on various occasions: Daphnis associates himself with the god while seeking to demonstrate to Chloe the superiority of his looks over Dorcon (1.16); later, looking at Chloe, he also thinks he is seeing a Nymph from the cave, i.e. a Bacchant (1.24.1). During the festival in honour of Dionysus, some women compare Daphnis to Dionysus: Οἷον οὖν εἰκὸς ἐν ἑορτῇ Διονύσου καὶ οἴνου γενέσει αἱ μὲν γυναῖκες ... τῷ Δάφνιδι τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐπέβαλλον καὶ ἐπῄνουν ὡς ὅμοιον τῷ Διονύσῳ τὸ κάλλος, "As is only natural at a festival celebrating Dionysus and the birth of wine, the women ... stared at Daphnis and complimented him, saying he was as beautiful as Dionysus" (2.2).[246]

The comparison of the hero to a god for his beauty in an erotic scene is not new: [247] in Homer, Odysseus wonders whether Nausicaa is a goddess or a mortal (*Od*. 6.149–52), while she thinks at first that he is ugly, later she changes her mind: πρόσθεν μὲν γὰρ δή μοι ἀεικέλιος δέατ' εἶναι, / νῦν δὲ θεοῖσιν ἔοικε, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν (242–3). Anchises appears to Aphrodite as δέμας ἀθανάτοισιν ἐοικώς in *h.Aphr*. 54–5, and θεῶν ἄπο κάλλος ἔχοντα in 77. In the novel, many female heroines are compared to or mistaken for goddesses: in Chariton, Dionysius, Chaereas' rival, mistakes Callirhoe for Aphrodite while the girl is paying her tributes to the goddess.[248] Colluthus makes things more interesting here by

245 Longus 4.26.2 (Reardon 1989, 312 n. 36, 334 n. 362).

246 In the same circumstance, the men in the winepresses praise Chloe's beauty and their jumping around her is compared by Longus to the dancing of satyrs around a Bacchant: 2.2: οἱ δὲ ἐν ταῖς ληνοῖς ποικίλας φωνὰς ἔρριπτον ἐπὶ τὴν Χλόην καὶ ὥσπερ ἐπί τινα Βάκχην Σάτυροι μανικώτερον ἐπήδων, "The men who were squashing the grapes in the vats were addressing colourful expressions to Chloe, and were frantically dancing like Satyrs around a Bacchant". Daphnis and Chloe make sacrifices to Dionysus in 3.9.2; an ekphrasis of pictures at a temple of the god is described at 4.3.1–3 (and the owner of these pictures is named Dionysophanes, a sort of deus ex machina who resolves the problems of the plot; Cleariste is compared by Reardon 1989, 338 n. 68 to Alcinous' wife Arete in *Od*. 6.305–15, 7.54–5).

247 For characters of the novel who are as beautiful as gods see Létoublon 1993, 122–3.

248 Char. 2.3.6–7. When Dionysius hears the girl speaking, the similarity of her voice to that of a god makes him fall in love: λαλούσης δὲ αὐτῆς ἡ φωνὴ τῷ Διονυσίῳ θεία τις ἐφάνη· μουσικὸν γὰρ ἐφθέγγετο καὶ ὥσπερ κιθάρας ἀπεδίδου τὸν ἦχον. ἀπορηθεὶς οὖν καὶ ἐπὶ πλέον ὁμιλεῖν καταιδεσθεὶς ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὴν ἔπαυλιν, φλεγόμενος ἤδη τῷ ἔρωτι, "As she spoke, her voice seemed the voice of a god to Dionysius; it had a musical sound, with the effect of a lyre's note. He did not know what to do; he was too embarrassed to continue talking to her; so he went off to his house, already aflame with love" (trans. B. Reardon). Sapph. fr. 31 LP

not introducing a simile,[249] but making the viewer seek for clues in the face of the stranger and seeking twice to identify him. By doing so, he steps closer to Heliodorus' above-mentioned passage and thus to a philosophical clarification of the episode. Comparing the beloved to a god means idealising the beloved,[250] a process that is displayed (to continue with Chariton's passage) in Dionysius remembering every single detail about the girl while lying in his bed unable to sleep (2.4.3), and in the famous scene of Medea re-seeing images of Jason's looks and clothes, but also his words. Here, the subjective representation of Medea's interiority is constructed through visual and auditory pictures that return to her mind and that contribute to her belief that no other man is like him.[251] In the case of Colluthus, there is no time (within the short epyllion) for the two lovers to remember each other: the focus is all concentrated on their first and only meeting. Thus, by making Helen search for a god in her beloved, the poet may be somehow anticipating what in Apollonius happens later; the effort that Helen makes to recognise someone in Paris' face works therefore as a sort of memory that she is seeking to retrieve.

The comparison of the beloved to a god was also a key topic of ethopoiiai; this theme allowed for sequences of emphatic questions regarding the identity of the person (just as happens with Helen, who asks herself), for scenes of amazement, and for monologues which implied the presence of a passive interlocutor.[252] Colluthus borrows many devices from this form of rhetorical exercise on this occasion and also later, when he voices Hermione's story through a long and highly dramatic monologue; once again, a context of public

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φαίνεταί μοι κῆνος ἴσος θέοισιν ἔμμεν' ὤνηρ; in Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 3.956–61, Jason is compared to Sirius for his beauty when he appears to Medea.

249 In Longus, 1.24.3, Daphnis and Chloe attempt to find similarities between each other's features and nature: καὶ ἡ μὲν εἴκασεν αὐτοῦ τὴν κόμην, ὅτι μέλαινα, μύρτοις, ὁ δὲ μήλῳ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῆς, ὅτι λευκὸν καὶ ἐνερευθὲς ἦν.

250 Fusillo 1989, 201.

251 Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 3.451–8: πολλὰ δὲ θυμῷ / ὥρμαιν' ὅσσα τ' ἔρωτες ἐποτρύνουσι μέλεσθαι· / προπρὸ δ' ἄρ' ὀφθαλμῶν ἔτι οἱ ἰνδάλλετο πάντα, / αὐτός θ' οἷος ἔην οἵοισί τε φάρεσιν ἧστο / οἷά τ' ἔειφ' ὥς θ' ἕζετ' ἐπὶ θρόνου ὥς τε θύραζε / ἤιεν· οὐδέ τιν' ἄλλον ὀίσσατο πορφύρουσα / ἔμμεναι ἀνέρα τοῖον· ἐν οὔασι δ' αἰὲν ὀρώρει / αὐδή τε μῦθοί τε μελίφρονες οὓς ἀγόρευσεν, "But in her soul all the love's troubles were in turmoil: in front of her eyes still the images formed of every detail: the appearance of Jason and his clothes, how he spoke how he sat, how he moved to leave, and while she was thinking it seemed to her that no other man was like him; his voice and the sweet words that she had heard always kept returning to her ears". Paduano and Fusillo 1986, 437 and Fusillo 1989, 201.

252 Agosti 2005a, 47–8.

reading would enhance the text, making it functional to the consumption of an educated audience.

The next phase in Paris and Helen's meeting involves Helen's astonishment (θαμβήσασα 267) and her questioning of Paris about his origins.[253] Helen's amazement represents another standard erotic symptom: in Heliodorus, both lovers also stand in amazement when they first meet: Πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ἀθρόον τι καὶ ἐπτοημένον ἔστησαν (*Aeth.* 3.5.5), "first, they stood motionless, struck by sudden amazement". This phase is particularly crucial as it denotes visual interaction:[254] the intensity of Helen's gaze comes back to her in the form of astonishment: θαμβέω expresses a stupefied wonder, and it often describes the reaction to some other visual impact on the viewer.[255] For instance, in Homer Helen is amazed when Aphrodite, who is looking at her with flashing eyes in an epiphany,[256] invites her to return to Paris: ὡς οὖν ἐνόησε θεᾶς … ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα, θάμβησεν (*Il.* 3.398).

Once she has realised that she is not standing before Eros or Dionysus, Helen seeks to discover the stranger's origins once again by seeking to fit the stranger into a domain of her knowledge, as if putting the pieces of a jigsaw back together. She organises her speech in a rational way, firstly acknowledging his beauty and thus assuming that he may be a king, then proceeding to list the famous (and beautiful) Greek heroes known to her, and concluding that she has never seen his face before (268–77). In *Il.* 3.234–5 Helen also claims that she can list the Greek heroes.[257] In fact, Helen's mysterious powers of recognition are well demonstrated in the *teichoscopia* in *Iliad* 3, and in *Odyssey* 4, where she recognises Neoptolemus. Moreover, her provoking behaviour in

253 The offering of a seat and the questions about his origins to a foreigner is an epic formulaic scene: see Nonn. *Dion.* 3.242–9, where Cadmus satisfies Electra's curiosity, and 1.90–124, where an Achaean sailor wonders about the sight of Europa riding on a bull; Triph. 283–90, where Priam offers protection and questions Sinon about the θαῦμα of the horse (Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 275); in Homer, e.g., *Od.* 1.170, 3.71, 14.47.

254 Constantinidou 1994, 11.

255 Prier 1989, 87–8.

256 Aphrodite's flashing eyes are a traditional feature of the goddess' beauty and a clue for her recognition (she here appears disguised as a Spartan woman), see Constantinidou 1994, 12.

257 Kennedy 1986, 12 noted how, however, her inability to see and visually represent (in her web) the heroes (for instance, she is unaware that her brothers Castor and Polydeuces have died) reflects the superiority of oral poetry, as the bard can also represent sound and dynamism, and is omniscient.

Triph. 469–77,[258] where she goes around the horse three times and calls the Achaeans by name, mimicking the voices of their wives in the hope that they break down, reveals that she is aware of the identities of the heroes who are hidden inside. When, in Colluthus, she states that she does not recognise Paris' face, we can be rather sure that her scrutiny has been thorough.

Her first question (ξεῖνε, πόθεν τελέθεις; ἐρατὸν γένος εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν 268)[259] echoes Medea's question to Jason in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.1071–2 εἰπὲ δέ μοι πρόφρων τόδε· πῇ τοι ἔασιν δώματα; In Heliodorus, Chariclea also inquires about Theagenes' origins (τίνων δέ ἐστιν ἢ πόθεν;),[260] and in Musaeus, Hero is also curious about Leander's origins (εἰπὲ δέ, μὴ κρύψῃς, τέον οὔνομα καὶ σέο πάτρην 185). The interest for the beloved's origins reveals a desire to approach, and become more familiar with, the stranger.[261]

After excluding that the stranger belongs to the divine category, Helen considers whether he may be a king, based on his beauty (ἀγλαΐην μὲν ἔοικας ἀριζήλῳ βασιλῆι 269) which has impressed her so much. Helen claims to know Deucalion's offspring, Antilochus, the lineage of Aeacus and other heroes (Peleus, Telamon, Patroclus and Achilles). She knows for a fact that he does not come from Pylus or Phtia, and she reiterates that she is certain she has not seen the stranger before (ἀλλὰ τεὴν οὐκ οἶδα παρ' Ἀργείοισι γενέθλην 270, and τεὴν δ' οὐκ εἶδον ὀπωπὴν 273). The line echoes Mus. *Her.* 76 τοίην δ'οὔ ποτ' ὄπωπα νέην ἰδανήν θ'ἁπαλήν τε, "but I have never seen such a sweet and beautiful young woman". Helen is seeking to impress Paris by listing the Greek heroes with whom she is familiar, perhaps noting that her beauty has not had the same effect on him that his looks have had on her. Paris' beauty has clearly impressed Helen, but since he does not react in a similar way, she uses her credentials to gain his attention. Helen is also the most beautiful woman in the world: she may be used to men's attention or reaction to her appearance, but nothing seems to be happening with this attractive stranger, and her mindset may be "you impress me with your beauty, but who are you? Let's see your credentials". She speaks from the height of her status as Menelaus' wife, her reputation as the most beautiful woman in the word, and her familiarity with

258 The scene is developed by Triphiodorus after *Od.* 4.278–9 (Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 370).

259 On the vocative ξεῖνε employed to open speeches to foreigners see Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 273.

260 Hel. *Aeth.* 4.5.5. Chariclea's question also involves an interesting Freudian twist as she wants to know about Theagenes "whether he looked at me with an evil eye or not", as Calasiris had told her.

261 Fusillo 1989, 206.

famous Greek families and heroes, while the stranger so far has only beauty with which to stake his claim.

On his part, Paris has gained (in the eyes of the readers) a higher profile through the various stages of his description: when he arrives at Helen's house, we already know that he is a prince, the son of Priam, and that he is beautiful, while Helen does not know him. His status is not demeaned by the fact that Helen does not know who he is, however, as she claims to know only Greek heroes. Therefore, her erotic gaze does not affect his status in any way, in contrast to Euripides' Hippolytus, who protected his purity from Phaedra's gaze.[262]

At the end of her speech, Helen's desire for Paris is finally declared (Πάριν ποθέουσα 278): the contrast with Paris, who was desiring Helen already before their meeting (193), is evident and based on the power of both vision (in Helen's case) and fame (for Paris). The prince-shepherd is the clear object of desire in the scene, as her eyes are fixed on him, while nothing is said about Paris' visual behaviour towards Helen.

Next, it is Paris' turn to speak. His speech is articulated in two parts: first, he declares his identity and his ancestors (280–90),[263] and then he explains his role and the reason behind his visit, urging Helen to leave with him.

His speech aims to be seductive and persuasive. The prince demonstrates here what he has learnt from Aphrodite's speech earlier; Colluthus adds rhetorical skills[264] to his beauty and his status by making Paris a skillful orator. Helen's brief welcome (266–75) echoes the shrill pastoral music (λιγύθροος 278—λιγυρὴν 112—λιγύπνοον 311), while Paris opens with a honeyed speech (μειλιχίην ἠμείβετο γῆρυν ἀνοίξα, 279) to Helen. His introduction preludes his success: Nonnus' Cadmus also spoke in a honeyed voice (which seduced Aphrodite/Peisinoe and Harmonia),[265] and in Triph. 117–9, Odysseus' words flow like a torrent of runny honey.[266] He employs the same climax that Aphrodite had

262 Hawley 1998, 90.

263 For aristocratic origins, wealth and beauty as features of the characters of novel see Létoublon 1993, 119–21.

264 Harries 2006, 543 n. 94 notes how the whole speech is modelled on Theocr. *Id.* 18 (*Epith. Hel.*).

265 Nonn. *Dion.* 4.140; see Frangoulis 2006, 46 for the feminisation of Cadmus, whose voice is like that of Leucippe in Ach. Tat. 2.7.6 and of Chloe in Long. 1.18.1.

266 The effect of his words on his companions is anticipated by the description of his speech, in which Triphiodorus employs different metaphors: speaking is assimilated to giving birth, and his words fall on his companions like snowflakes (Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 195–7). Compare also the persuasive voices (πειθήμονι φωνῇ) of Aphrodite (Triph. 456) and of Jesus (Nonn. *Par.* 4.70); Deceit also speaks persuasive words in Nonn. *Dion.* 8.165.

employed in 188–89 in 302–3, and in 300 he asks a rhetorical question and plays with the revealing ambiguity of Κύπριν. Paris's speech reminds us of that of Jason, who appears as a skilled diplomat from Pindar (*Pyth.* 4.136–8), through Euripides (*Med.* 446–7, 455–6, 621–2), to Apollonius (*Arg.* 3.385–96), especially in 2.621 and 1.294–305, where he employs μειλιχίοις ἐπέεσσι and παραβλήδην.[267] However, Hunter notes, such honeyed words need not to convey the whole truth but rather aim to comfort the listener, and παραβλήδην is not associated with truth either (3.1078–101).[268] Remembering the impression of deceitfulness associated with Jason's speech to Medea, readers would perhaps have perceived Paris' words in a similar way.

Odysseus had explained how a man may be inferior in looks (εἶδος ἀκινδνότερος) but wrapped in beauty in his speech due to the gods (μορφὴν ἔπεσι, *Od.* 8.170): in Paris' case, beauty is not in question, as we have seen. Odysseus had also decided to invest in ἐπέεσσιν μειλιχίοισι (*Od.* 6.143, 146, 148) to impress Nausicaa, instead of begging at her knees; our Paris does not hesitate between options.

The prince relies on his ancestors and on their deeds to impress Helen: he speaks of his father's wealth, of his ancestor Dardanus, son of Zeus, and how he was served by the immortals, Poseidon and Apollo, who built the towers of Troy (281, 289–90), where as a prince he meets the requirements of his lineage (284). This last statement is the only credit that Paris can claim for himself: he trusts his divine origins to impress Helen much more than anything else, failing to realise that his beauty has already done that.

Through his confidence in the reputation of his lineage Paris seeks to match Helen's fame. To do so, he reveals his identity and re-creates his own κλέος by assuming the position of a self-singing bard, just as when Odysseus[269] sings among the Phaeacians of his own glory, playing the unusual role of singer and object sung at the same time.[270] However, Paris' self-introduction appears closer to the speech of Aeneas to Dido in *Aeneid* 1, a re-elaboration of the Odyssean passage: in Virgil, Aeneas, like Paris, boasts about his Trojan origins (Coll. 280–83, Virg. 375–6); he is sent by sponsor Aphrodite (294–5, 298—

267 Clare 2002, 276–80.

268 Hunter 1988, 446–7.

269 *Od.* 9.19–20 εἴμ' Ὀδυσεὺς Λαερτιάδης, ὃς πᾶσι δόλοισιν / ἀνθρώποισι μέλω, καί μευ κλέος οὐρανὸν ἵκει, "I am Odysseus, son of Laertes, known among men for all my guiles, and my fame reaches the sky".

270 Segal 1995, 204–5 highlights how κλέος identifies both the songs sung by bards in praise of gods and heroes, as well as the eternal fame that lives forever among men and keeps the hero's name alive.

Virg. 382 *matre dea monstrante viam*),[271] and before revealing his identity (Coll. 285—Virg. 384), he questions Dido with two conditional clauses (280–3—Virg. 372–6), of which Colluthus' first echoes closely Virgil's second: εἴ τινά που Φρυγίης ἐνὶ πείρασι γαῖαν ἀκούεις, Ἴλιον 280–1, *si vestras forte per auris Troiae nomen iit* 375–6). However, Paris omits to state his name.[272] His refined speech proves effective and stylistically superior to his previous rustic song (ἀγροτέρων καλάμων λιγυρὴν … ἀοιδήν 112).

In the Homeric model, Odysseus is removed from the heroic context of battles and prowess; therefore, his speech presents a retrospective κλέος (he has already fought at Troy, thus his heroic achievements belong to his past); in Paris' case, the heroic successes are still ahead of him, and he cannot brag about his achievements in the war even if he wanted to. He invests in telling Helen about his lineage because this is all he has (and it is not enough: when he receives the visit of Hermes, he is not engaged in acting as the son of a king but in playing the beautiful shepherd). Moreover, Odysseus makes himself proud of his δόλοι, not his ἀρετή.[273] He needs a more universal type of κλέος, one that goes beyond ἀρετή,[274] to defeat and intellectually overcome the monsters that he meets during his journey back home, and now that he is about to tell the Phaeacians about his travelling adventures, his astuteness is all the more valuable as nobody cares about his physical appearance any longer.[275] On the other hand, Paris cannot as yet claim any similar qualities, and even when he does he is actually using the achievements of his lineage once again (284). Moreover, the complete truthfulness of each of the credits that he quotes is questionable: Paris mentions his father's wealth, but his full kinship to the royal house can be debated; he mentions that Poseidon and Apollo built the towers of Troy for Dardanus, his ancestor, but since he never paid their wages, the towers were left unfinished; he boasts about fulfilling the duties of his lineage, but is he referring to his shepherding activities? With such a debatable *curriculum vitae*, Paris may fail to impress an educated reader; one may think that Paris has no

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271 And so is Leander in Mus. *Her*. 152 σοὶ δέ με Κύπρις ἔπεμψε.

272 Harries 2006, 544. A detail picked up by Helen who addresses him once again as ξεῖνε at 308, as she had done at 268, prior to his introduction: he remains a stranger to her. See also Giangrande 1969, 153 on the "cocky" use of vocative preceded by ὦ here.

273 According to Penelope's portrait in 4.725–6=4.815–16: παντοίῃσ' ἀρετῇσι κεκασμένον ἐν Δαναοῖσιν, / ἐσθλόν, τοῦ κλέος εὐρὺ καθ' Ἑλλάδα καὶ μέσον Ἄργος, "who among the Danaans excelled in all virtues, a brave man, whose fame goes wide through Hellas and the midst of Argos" (trans. Segal).

274 Segal 1995, 206–10 analyses the hero's moral progression from ἀρετή to κλέος.

275 *Il*. 3.223–4: what a change from when Odysseus' looks had impressed Nausicaa in *Od*. 6.237; see Constantinidou 1994, 4–5.

merit at all, or that his speech is meant to appear ironic. He adheres to the cliché of a deceitful barbarian. However, Helen is not aware of any of these flaws, therefore she believes him. Paris is disguising the truth (or the full truth) about his background in his speech to her, but in the end she exposes the deceit: she brands him ἀπατήλιος (380) and ἀθεμίστιος(385) precisely because of this half-truth, his lack of honesty at the time of their first meeting, when she asked for his credentials.

A further difference between Paris and Odysseus concerns the audience of their speeches: while Odysseus asks Penelope (his wife) not to ask about his lineage as this would bring back painful memories and grief (*Od.* 19.116–18), Paris, before Helen, boasts about his name, his ancestors and his fatherland, as heroes typically do in heroic (but not necessarily erotic) contexts.[276]

Paris' speech seems to reflect the emotional interaction of Jason's speech to Medea in Apollonius,[277] when she asks him about his hometown: the hero specifies that he also wishes to share information about his origins (εἰ δέ τοι ἡμετέρην ἐξίδμεναι εὔαδε πάτρην, / ἐξερέω· μάλα γάρ με καὶ αὐτὸν θυμὸς ἀνώγει, *Arg*. 3.1083–4). His sincerity is not questionable, but what his speech reveals is the superficiality of his feelings towards Medea, as he later on rhetorically asks what the point is of telling her about his provenance, openly lessening the importance of the information: ἀλλὰ τίη τάδε τοι μεταμώνια πάντ' ἀγορεύω, / ἡμετέρους τε δόμους 1096–7, "why should I tell you empty words about my household". This does not come as a surprise from ἀμήχανος Jason, a "disappointing" hero who needs encouragement, reassurance and the aid of Medea's magical powers.[278] Our Paris also concludes his speech by asking Helen a rhetorical question about the uselessness of the information that he has just given her (οὐκ ἐρέω· τί δὲ τόσσον ἐπισταμένην σε διδάξω; οἶσθα γάρ, ὡς Μενέλαος ἀνάλκιδός ἐστι γενέθλης 300–1), thus showing a lack of consideration and understanding of the real nature of Helen's interest similar to that shown by Jason towards Medea. Jason demonstrates in his speech that he views Medea as her own father, and although she is reassured by his promise to bring her away as his bride, his reply disappoints and mortifies her by showing a potential exploitation of her feelings. Moreover, he positions her in a much lower place in his hierarchy of values by only providing information she already has, and

276 For instance, Glaucus speaking to Diomedes in *Il.* 6.150–211. See Segal 1995, 207–8.

277 Hunter 1987.

278 For Mori 2008, 90, Jason's heroism lies in his diplomatic skills and self-control. Knight 1995, 104 interprets Jason's heroism in light of the Homeric model, in the wake of Hunter 1988 (a school of thought which has led to many interpretations of the psychology of Jason from the perspective of modern concern with a central hero rather than with a pattern of events—see for instance Vian 1978, Beye 1982 and Clauss 1993).

insisting not on the erotic involvement with her, but on the political aspects of his role (especially his deal with her father and the figure of Ariadne).

The imbalance of Jason and Medea's feelings appears clear from the beginning.[279] Although Paris does not have another priority as Jason has (recovering the fleece and returning safely with it to Iolcos), his interest in Helen is not purely erotic but also based on his expectation of the prize awarded to him by Aphrodite. Like Achilles in the *Iliad*, he demands what is owed to him. He thus proceeds to announce to Helen what their respective roles are and what the purpose of his visit is: he first presents himself as the δικασπόλος θεάων, and explains to her what his achievements are (i.e. settling a suit among the goddesses and praising Aphrodite's beauty, ἀκηχεμένῃσιν ἐπουρανίῃσι δικάζων / Κύπριδος ἀγλαΐην καὶ ἐπήρατον ᾔνεσα μορφήν 292–3, "while making a decision amongst the annoyed heavenly goddesses, I chose the beauty of Cypris and her charming shape"), then justifies his intentions by sealing them with divine intervention ("it is Aphrodite who offered this prize to me", 294–6) and personal accomplishments, such as that of overcoming the stormy waterspout (ἧς ἕνεκεν τέτληκα καὶ οἴδματα τόσσα περῆσαι 297, "I have endured to cross such seas"). At this point Paris distances himself completely from Helen by speaking of her in the third person,[280] as if she were absent: his emotional detachment makes Helen seem to be a recompense (ἀντάξιον) that is owed to him, putting her in a similar position as Medea, an instrument to Jason. He then urges her (in the first person plural) to marry him, but not because of her beauty or personality: he is simply urging her to obey the goddess' orders (298).[281] What is more, he supports his request not by begging her to reciprocate his desire, but by expressing his fear of being humiliated by her refusal (μή με καταισχύνειας, ἐμὴν μὴ Κύπριν ἐλέγξῃς 299). Leander, in Mus. *Her*. 157, uses the same concept to persuade Hero: πείθεο καὶ σύ, φίλη, μὴ Κύπριδι μῆνιν ἐγείρῃς, "You too, my dear, obey, and do not awaken Cypris' anger".[282] Paris concludes his plea with a clumsy observation (302–4):

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279 Clauss 1997, 151–75 discusses Jason and Medea's complementary roles as the hero depends on the help of others to complete his task. His heroism is a joint success with Medea, who is powerful and fundamental; see also Paduano 1986, 505. On Jason succeeding due to the employment of un-Homeric methods (Medea's magic and a human intermediary) see Knight 1995, 100 and 113.

280 See Chapter 4.

281 Similarly, Jason's promises, including the one to marry Medea, appear only at the end of his speech, as a somehow forced last resort to convince the girl to help him, in Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 3.1122–30.

282 Note also Ov. *Her*. 16.40–1 *sic placuit fatis; quae ne convellere temptes, / accipe cum vera dicta relata fide*, "So the Fates are pleased: do not try to shy away from them, accept the words I tell you, in true honour".

οὐ τοῖαι γεγάασιν ἐν Ἀργείοισι γυναῖκες,
καὶ γὰρ ἀκιδνοτέροισιν ἀεξόμεναι μελέεσσιν
ἀνδρῶν εἶδος ἔχουσι, νόθοι δ' ἐγένοντο γυναῖκες.

Women born among the Argives are not like you: for although they grow with weaker limbs, they look like men, and are just counterfeit women.

As in the Homeric poems, there is no reference to Helen's beauty at all. What is surprising, however, is the absence of any visual sign to denote an unspoken reaction on the part of the prince at the sight of the most beautiful woman in the world. Paris' speech does not exude any erotic signal in his words or in his visual behaviour, and does not match Helen's interest in any form. All the clichés of erotic-meeting scenarios have been used by the poet in Helen's behaviour but not in Paris', and his speech demonstrates that he has read the woman's hints all wrong. While she is impressed by his beauty, he responds to Helen's acquaintance by speaking of his father and the gods who are his friends, and trusts a divine command to persuade the daughter of Zeus to marry him. Similarly, in Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen* 19.4.1.3, Helen cannot fight back the eros generated by her gazing over Paris' body, and for this reason she is not guilty: Colluthus may be exploiting a similar technique to balance responsibilities and to highlight to readers what the reasons behind Helen's actions are, explaining the dynamics behind the meeting of Medea and Jason in Apollonius' *Argonautica* 3. This erotically imbalanced scene contrasts with the harmonious meeting of Hero and Leander in Musaeus, where the poet not only highlights at various points how the two lovers read, and respond to, each other's signals (ὁ δ' ἔνδοθι θυμὸν ἰάνθη, / ὅττι πόθον συνέηκε καὶ οὐκ ἀπεσείσατο κούρη 107–108, "he rejoiced in his heart because the girl had understood his desire and had not rejected him"; ὡς δ' ἐρατῆς ἐνόησε χαλίφρονα νεύματα κούρης 117, "but the lover understood her weak signals") but also theorises the psychology behind contradictory signals: Θηλείης δὲ Λέανδρος ὅτ' ἔκλυεν οἶστρον ἀπειλῆς, / ἔγνω πειθομένων σημήια παρθενικάων· / καὶ γὰρ ὅτ' ἠιθέοισιν ἀπειλείουσι γυναῖκες 129–31, "Leander understood the deep meaning of the girl's threat and recognised in it the sign of the girl's surrender. In fact, when women threaten young men, this is almost a preannouncement of loving affairs",[283] and πειθοῦς γὰρ τάδε πάντα προάγγελα· παρθενικῆς δὲ / πειθομένης ποτὶ λέκτρον ὑπόσχεσίς ἐστι σιωπή 164–5, "all of these are signs of surrender, as silence is the promise of a young virgin persuaded to love". In contrast, Colluthus presents a one-way communication that reveals Paris' lack of erotic interest in Helen: while she

283 Note Colluthus' reappraisal of οἶστρος in 97.

seeks to seduce and impress him, he comes to execute Aphrodite's order and to cash in his prize.

The lack of reaction to Helen's beauty is not only evident from the fact that Paris does not refer to her beauty (in contrast to Luc. *Dial. Deor*. 14, where, enquiring about Helen, he asks ποία δὲ τὴν ὄψιν ἐστί; "what is her appearance?"), but also by the fact that Colluthus does not describe Paris' gestural behaviour, while he provides plenty of information about Helen's. Her obvious interest is imbalanced versus his impassivity. Similarly, Helen's entrance is described in detail during Telemachus' and Peisistratus' visit to Menelaus' house,[284] but not one of the men who are present looks at or comments on her: Telemachus keeps crying, while Peisistratus and Menelaus are busy reminiscing and evoking tearful memories of Troy. The most beautiful woman in the world does not provoke any reaction in the whole passage. The common feature of the two passages may confirm an established tendency to avoid precise descriptions of Helen,[285] as this could set boundaries to a legendary beauty and may be in line with the intention to entrust her beauty to the reputation of it, which would leave the imagination of whoever hears of her run wild. Thus Paris, who heard of her from Aphrodite, immediately creates pictures of her in his mind, and this generates desire in him, but now that he faces the woman herself and can see her with his own eyes, he does not react. The irony of this paradoxical situation is created by the expectation that Colluthus has generated in Paris (the viewer),[286] and by his laconic and emotionless reaction.

Helen now responds to Paris' invitation with a behaviour that confirms an imbalance between the two: his speech leaves her perplexed, speechless and stunned (305–7); she then expresses admiration for Apollo's and Poseidon's intervention in building Troy's walls and she wishes she could see that (308–13).[287] Finally, she orders him to bring her to Sparta, and confirms her willingness to obey the δικασπόλος Paris and Aphrodite's orders, a formal commitment (sealed by συνθείην 317) that goes beyond the fear of her husband's reaction (ἀγρέο νῦν Σπάρτηθεν ἐπὶ Τροίην με κομίζων. / ἕψομαι, ὡς Κυθέρεια γάμων

284 *Od*. 4.120–37. Helen sits on a throne with a woollen rug, and a stool is placed under her feet. Only the poet compares her to Artemis.

285 In Euripides' *Helen* 1087–8 and 1186–8, the only details provided about her looks are her long curly hair (which she cuts) and white robe, which she changes for a black one before celebrating the fake funeral rite for Menelaus.

286 And in the readers, who also "see" Helen now for the first time.

287 Her desire to come in contact with Paris is evident here, similarly to Medea's wish to appear unexpected at Jason's fireplace in *Arg*. 3.116–17.

βασίλεια κελεύει. / οὐ τρομέω Μενέλαον, ὅταν Τροίῃ με νοήσῃ. / τοίην συνθείην καλλίσφυρος ἔννεπε νύμφη 314–17, "Come now; carry me from Sparta to Troy. I will follow you, as Cytherea, queen of marriage, commands. I do not fear Menelaus, when Troy will have known me. Such is the agreement that the fair-ankled lady proposed"). The commitment expressed by Helen reflects that demanded by Medea in Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 4.88–91, where she reminds Jason of the promise he had made her, and asks him to call his companions and the gods as witnesses; however, his reassurance (95–98), although complaint with formal terminology, remains unfulfilled.

Once again, Colluthus' first concern is to describe Helen's gestural behaviour: she fixes her eyes onto the ground (ἡ δ' ἐρόεσσαν ἐπὶ χθονὶ πῆξεν ὀπωπήν 305), an initial sign of her perplexity and/or coyness at Paris' words.[288] Antenor described Odysseus as he looked down and concentrated before uttering words that fell onto the ground like snowflakes.[289] Hera and Athena also fixed their eyes before their feet (ποδῶν πάρος ὄμματ' ἔπηξαν, Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 3.22) before resolving to consult Aphrodite. Interestingly, Jason and Medea both fix their eyes onto the ground, in a shared moment of modest emotion (ἄμφω δ' ἄλλοτε μέν τε κατ' οὔδεος ὄμματ' ἔρειδον / αἰδόμενοι, Ap. Rh. *Arg* 3.1022–3), but here Helen is alone in her confusion. Speaking of modesty: in Nonn. *Dion*. 42.208–16, Pan teaches Dionysus a love lesson which Helen here may be showing to have learnt:

> ἀλλὰ πόθου δολίοιο πολύτροπον ἦθος ἐνίψω.
> πᾶσα γυνὴ ποθέει πλέον ἀνέρος, αἰδομένη δὲ
> κεύθει κέντρον Ἔρωτος ἐρωμανέουσα καὶ αὐτή,
> καὶ μογέει πολὺ μᾶλλον, ἐπεὶ σπινθῆρες ἐρώτων
> θερμότεροι γεγάασιν, ὅτε κρύπτουσι γυναῖκες
> ἐνδόμυχον πραπίδεσσι πεπαρμένον ἰὸν ἐρώτων.
> καὶ γὰρ ὅτ' ἀλλήλῃσι πόθων ἐνέπουσιν ἀνάγκην,
> λυσιπόνοις ὀάροισιν ὑποκλέπτουσι μερίμνας
> Κυπριδίας.

> But I shall reveal to you the many usual tricks of desire. Every woman desires more than a man, but for modesty she hides the goad of love, mad of love, her too, and she suffers even more, since the sparkles of love burn

288 Similarly Hero in Mus. 160: Παρθενικὴ δ' ἄφθογγος ἐπὶ χθόνα πῆξεν ὀπωπήν, and 169 ποτὶ γαῖαν ἔχεν νεύουσαν ὀπωπήν.

289 *Il*. 3.217–22 ὑπαὶ δὲ ἴδεσκε κατὰ χθονὸς ὄμματα πήξας … ἔπεα νιφάδεσσιν ἐοικότα χειμερίῃσιν. See Constantinidou 1994, 3–4.

> more when women hide the arrow of love embedded in the depths of their heart. For, when they confess to each other the irrepressible desire, they disguise the distress of Cypris as they vent in their chats.

Perhaps she is also hiding the goad of eros, and her body language reveals her awareness of the terrible decision she is about to make.

Helen is lost for words (δηρὸν ἀμηχανέουσα καὶ οὐκ ἠμείβετο νύμφη 306), struck by aphasia, another common symptom of the erotic disease.[290] Sappho first spoke of how eros makes one speechless,[291] and the physiological process became part of the standard framework.[292] Penelope was also silent and stunned at the sight of Odysseus: ἡ δ' ἄνεω δὴν ἧστο, τάφος δέ οἱ ἦτορ ἵκανεν, "she sat for a long time in silence, wonder filled her chest" (*Od.* 23.93) and she admits to Telemachus (105–7):

> θυμός μοι ἐνὶ στήθεσσι τέθηπεν
> οὐδέ τι προσφάσθαι δύναμαι ἔπος οὐδ' ἐρέεσθαι,
> οὐδ' εἰς ὦπα ἰδέσθαι ἐναντίον.

> My heart is filled with wonder in my chest: I am unable to say a word to him, or to interrogate him, nor can I look at him in the face.

In Apollonius, being lost for words is no longer just a symptom of the erotic phenomenology but also represents Medea's inhibitory scruples:[293] she suffers from aphasia from the very first moment Eros hits her with his dart (τὴν δ' ἀμφασίη λάβε θυμόν, *Arg.* 3.284), and she is speechless time and time again during the meeting.[294] More significantly, the symptom is once again shared with Jason as they first meet in a long moment of silence: τὼ δ' ἄνεῳ καὶ ἄναυδοι ἐφέστασαν ἀλλήλοισιν *Arg.* 3.967,[295] "So they two stood face to face in silence", while in Colluthus Helen suffers alone.

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290 Fusillo 1989, 202.

291 Sapph. fr. 31.6–7 LP ὤς με φώναισ' οὐδ' ἒν ἔτ' εἴκει, ἀλλὰ κὰμ μὲν γλῶσσα †ἔαγε†.

292 For instance, in Char. 2.7.4. Dionysius is speechless when he hears that Callirhoe is there (ἀκούσας οὖν ὅτι Καλλιρόη πάρεστιν, ἄφωνος ἐγένετο).

293 Paduano 1986, 417.

294 Ap. Rh. 3.1011 οὐδ' ἔχεν ὅττι πάροιθεν ἔπος προτιμυθήσαιτο, "she did not know what word to say first"; 1063 σῖγα; in 1137–8 even Medea's maids watch her from afar, upset, and in silence: ἀμφίπολοι μὲν ὀπιπτεύουσαι ἄπωθεν σιγῇ ἀνιάζεσκον. Jason's flattery leaves Medea speechless, and she then recomposes herself with difficulty (Clare 2002, 276–9).

295 In Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.967–72, the two silent lovers are here assimilated to two oaks (the model is Sapph. fr. 47 LP, where eros is compared to the wind that shakes the oaks). This

The way in which Helen looks at Paris, a mixture of desire, amazement and wonder, discloses the inner turmoil that eros is causing her. The meeting of Helen and Paris is clearly based on the meeting of Jason and Medea narrated by Apollonius, a scene in which visuality also plays an important role, and that is in turn based on the encounter of Odysseus and Nausicaa (*Od.* 6.135–97). While Apollonius elaborates the Homeric passage,[296] we have seen how Colluthus plays with both these predecessors and with other models from the novel. In contrast to the encounter of Jason and Medea, however, Colluthus' scene does not include details of visual behaviour for both lovers but only for Helen. The counterpart here (Paris) does not show any emotion, does not communicate at all through his gaze, and more importantly since this is an erotic context, does not pick up on any erotic hint Helen is sending him, thus does not respond to either visual or auditory stimulation. While Jason and Medea's episode focusses largely on the visual interaction between both characters to each other's speech,[297] in our epyllion the visual activity works one way only, from Helen towards Paris. As previously discussed, Colluthus suggests many roles for his Paris, but his characterisation does not quite fit any of them. In particular, the poet plays with Paris' role as a lover, but we have seen in this chapter that his performance before Helen, anticipated through allusions from the beginning of the poem, disappoints, ultimately making him unfit (in the eyes of the readers) as a lover, too. However, the concern with a central hero and with psychological and romantic expectations is anachronistic here, and what should ultimately be considered is the character expressing his thoughts through his actions within his context,[298] independently from his audience's expectations. As we have seen, textual expectations are a different matter.

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scene is particularly significant as it marks the first emotional process shared by Jason and Medea as a couple (although he will detach himself from the erotic turmoil very quickly, thereby enhancing the fragility and temporariness of their common grounds). Then silence, which is a vehicle of inhibitory scruple because what is illicit is also ineffable, paradoxically becomes the highest form of emotional communication (Paduano 1986, 493).

296 My approach to the interpretation of Jason's behaviour owes much to Hunter 1987 and 1988.

297 The same can be said for Catullus 64, see Elsner 2007, 21, who defines the carmen as "a poem full of gaze", where visual attention is directed to both natural beauty (Ariadne), through voyeurism, and artificial creation (the ship Argo) which can attract the viewers' gaze as an unnatural excess, a *monstrum*. Wonder directed at both these types of spectacle is typical of late-antique poetry, see Agosti 2006b, 361.

298 Hunter 1987, 436–8.

## 5 Performative Aspects

Late-antique poetry is characterised by a sort of revolution in its fruition, which implies public reading (hence the influence of rhetorical genres such as invective, of ekphraseis,[299] of ethopoiiai and progymnasmata in general). Agosti argued that, especially in Egypt from the third century AD, poetry goes back to a pragmatic and performative dimension that implies a close connection with the audience, both in contexts of private literary circles, and on the occasion of public readings for festivals and poetic contests.[300] These occasions offered poets the opportunity to compete not only with each other but also with their poetic predecessors, engaging with tradition through emulation as well as competition. These aspects appear clearly in Agathias *AP* 4.4.67–70 and firstly in Nonn. *Dion.* 25.27–30, a second proem to the poem in which the poet introduces his innovations:[301]

> ἀλλὰ νέοισι καὶ ἀρχεγόνοισιν ἐρίζων
> εὐκαμάτους ἱδρῶτας ἀναστήσω Διονύσου,
> κρίνων ἠνορέην τεκέων Διός, ὄφρα νοήσω,
> τίς κάμε τοῖον ἀγῶνα, τίς εἴκελος ἔπλετο Βάκχῳ.

> I challenge new and old poets in glorifying the sweaty toils of Dionysus; and if I compare the manhood of the children of Zeus, it is because I want to find out who achieved such a deed, who was like Bacchus.

The *Dionysiaca*, in particular, contains some episodes that were suitable for public reading as they are independent (books 15 and 16: Hymnus and Nicaea; book 38: Phaeton), and some small auditoria such as those of Kom el-Dikka in Alexandria seem the perfect venues for this type of reading.[302]

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299 Renaut 2005, 197.

300 Agosti 2005a, 37, 2006a and 2008; Cribiore 2001a, 241–2.

301 Nonnus' programmatic and original innovation of competing with the ancient poets was embraced by others poets of the time, such as Dioscorus of Aphrodito (9.4–5 Fournet, on which see Agosti 2009) and especially Agathias (*AP* 4.3.114–117); on the topic see Miguélez-Cavero 2013a, 192–3.

302 Derda, Markiewicz, and Wypszicka 2007. Like most cities of Roman Egypt, Panopolis had a theatre, which did not survive but is mentioned in P. Panop. Beatty 1.333, line 375, dated to 298 AD (Agosti 2006a, 49); see also Gonnelli 2003, 321 n. 4.

The epyllion contains some features that reflect conventional aspects of these literary forms that were destined to public performance (ethopoiiai) and of a specific type of dramatic performance, the pantomime. Genres are thus drawn together by means of the shared feature of performative-oriented character, which penetrates the contemporary culture of the time.[303] As an educated scholar, Colluthus breathed, was nurtured by and in turn nurtured this culture, by producing a work that was necessarily influenced by scholastic exercises, ethopoiiai, ekphraseis and other rhetorical subgenres that were recited on public occasions. Pantomime, a theatrical form which still enjoyed much popularity by the first half of the sixth century,[304] also featured some of the same rhetorical devices, utilised here to achieve the same goals of producing pathos and engagement in its audience. For instance, the organisation of the plot in individual monodramas (as in the case of Hermione) and the employment of stylistic instruments (such as the concretisation and personification of ideal concepts) contribute to the dramatisation of the myth. Here, they are functional in creating a highly visual and dramatic tale that would help readers re-create in their imagination both the auditory experience of, for instance, a moving ethopoiia, and/or the visual experience of a pantomime. From this perspective, the observations discussed in the previous chapter about visuality, projected onto the podium/stage, acquire a new meaning that doubles the role of the addressees, that of the poet himself and the occasion: readers are also spectators; the poet is also a performer; the text acts as a script; literary characters are also imaginary actors with roles. Whether Colluthus chose to introduce these performance-related devices in his epyllion with the specific intention of writing a text as if it were a scholastic exercise or a pantomimic work is a secondary question, and one that does not affect the end result.

Pantomime was very popular with Colluthus' contemporaries: Choricius of Gaza's *Apologia Mimorum*[305] and Procopius of Caesarea's *Historia Arcana* are two well-known sources of information for this ballet-style silent act,[306] in

303 The interaction between rhetoric and poetry, and the role of rhetorical exercises as a model and influence for poetic works is well discussed in Webb 1997 and 2001.

304 Despite Anastasius' ban in 502, we can assume that spectacles resumed, at least outside of Constantinople.

305 Amato, Thévent and Ventrella (2014) and Amato, Corcella and Lauritzen (forthcoming); Penella 2009; Webb 2008 includes much work on the *Apologia*; Webb 2006; Weiss 2004, 24–32; Chuvin 1990, 116–17; Litsas 1982, 427–36. See also Westberg 2010. Amato, Corcella, Ventrella and Maréchaux 2014, 16–21 also provides an overview of pantomime in Gaza.

306 Proc. *Hist. Arc.* 9.8–13 and 20–22 (see Kaldellis 2010, 41–43).

which a single masked male dancer (ὀρχηστής) displayed his versatility in impersonating mythical or historical characters[307] accompanied by a chorus or a solo singer singing a libretto containing the plot and music.[308] The *Dionysiaca* have been defined "epica della gestualità" as pantomime is so influential in Nonnus[309] that in his proem he establishes his poetic ideal of visual word (but also acoustic-ποικιλία), evoking the apparition of Proteus (the ever-changing god),[310] which symbolises the variety of his song, and challenging him in a virtuosity contest which he wins, securing Dionysus as his protector (*Dion*. 1.13–15):[311]

ἀλλὰ χοροῦ ψαύοντα Φάρῳ παρὰ γείτονι νήσῳ
στήσατέ μοι Πρωτῆα πολύτροπον, ὄφρα φανείη
ποικίλον εἶδος ἔχων, ὅτι ποικίλον ὕμνον ἀράσσω

Evoke for me the image of multiform Proteus, while he joins your dance in the nearby island of Pharos, may he appear in the variety of his shapes, as I wish to sing a variegated song.

307 The body of the male pantomime was a canvas on which gender, age, divine or mortal nature, and sexuality could be displayed (Vesterinen 2007, 61–2, 132–3). In AP 16.289, the ability of dancer Xenophon of Smyrna to change roles during his performance in the *Bacchae* is praised; Paul the Silentiary admires the art of a deceased pantomime who was able to re-create "figures of men of old with silent gestures" (AP. 7.563.2–3.); in Nonn. *Dion*. 19.198–204 and 216–19, Maron uses his fingers to mime old myths. The dancer's versatility to switch between roles of different sexes, nature and age is also argued by Lucian *Salt*. 75, who defends pantomime performers' physical *symmetria* (the beauty ideal canonised by the Doryphorus of Polycletus). Pantomimes were generally considered effeminate.

308 Lada-Richards 2004, 17; Vesterinen 2007, 56.

309 For pantomime and its role within the *Dionysiaca* see Miguélez-Cavero 2009, 263–8. Characters who appear in dreams in the poem have theatrically exaggerated, artificial and spectacular features, as is the case of Eris (Auger 2003, 423).

310 Proteus, the transformer, represented a familiar model for orators (Luc. *Salt*. 19). He is nothing but a prototypical pantomimist who changes masks, and his transformations are nothing but impersonations on stage. The versatility required of pantomime dancers, who not only had to master the story but also had to be extremely skilled dancers and effective communicators within a silent act, is well described by Nonnus, in *Dion*. 7.19–21: ὅτε στροφάδεσσιν ἐρωαῖς / ὀρχηστὴρ πολύκυκλος ἑλίσσετο λαίλαπι ταρσῶν, / νεύματα μῦθον ἔχων, παλάμην στόμα, δάκτυλα φωνήν, "When the circling dancer twirled in twists and turns with a tumult of footsteps, using only nods for words, hand for mouth, fingers for voice".

311 Agosti 2006b, 354–55, and Shorrock 2008.

Therefore, stories of metamorphoses such as that of Silenus into a river (Nonn. *Dion*. 19.225–86) provide ideal content for pantomimes.[312] Like Proteus, Dionysus also shares a passion for transformation, and his connection with pantomime is made clear especially in the *Dionysiaca*.[313] Already the god of tragedy and comedy in classical times, he continues to be associated with theatrical arts in late antiquity.[314]

While we have extensive information on the introduction of pantomime in Rome under Augustus,[315] knowledge of late-antique pantomime is less broad.[316] Pantomime, which in imperial times was often associated with mime (especially in iconography),[317] flourished in Latin-speaking regions of the

312 Ingleheart 2008 and Schlapbach 2008, 314–337 explain how metamorphoses came to represent a popular topic of pantomime by arguing that pantomime and rhetoric shared models. In *Salt*. 19, Proteus, far from being a pantomime's model or content, is actually a pantomimist himself. Pantomime aspires to and re-enacts transformation, and is thus self-referential, as a pantomimist wants to be what he already is (an actor). This logic (Lada-Richards 2004 and 2007) explains other myths as pantomime performances: the divine skills of a metamorphosing god in mythology are really the good skills of a talented actor. The presentation of Proteus as a pantomime actor is a genial *aition* by Lucian, as, working on an actor's versatility or a performer's expressive possibilities, it leads to impersonation, then on to visibility, then on to eyewitnessing, and finally to truth. Plato (*Rep*. 3.398a) had seen the danger of a poet who could get lost in his character. In rhetoric, Proteus was a familiar model like the octopus, to which orators are compared, as mentioned by Pindar's version of Amphiaraus' admonition (Philodemus, *Rhet*. II p. 75, 32–4 Sudhanus).

313 Gonnelli 2003, 319–25.

314 From Hellenistic and imperial Egypt, in fact, dancers and travelling entertainers were usually called with the name Dionysus (Daris 1988).

315 Augustus introduced pantomime in Rome with Pylades from Cilicia and Bathyllus of Alexandria, (a friend of Mecenates), around 23 BC (Cass. Dio 53.31.2–3). The most popular occasion was the *Ludi Saeculares* in 17 BC, where at least one *saltator* performed. The games constituted an important part of the *princeps*' programme of cultural renovation (Zanker 1988, 101–2, and 167–93), joining archaic elements (dance) to Greek elements. Until 17 BC, pantomime had a poor reputation, as it was considered an unfit form of entertainment for respectable members of the *equites* rank and ladies, but Augustus aimed at rehabilitating it (Hunt 2008, 170–184).

316 Commodus granted public support for mimes and pantomime dancers. Pantomime was popular in Roman Britain and France around AD 300 (Hall-Wyles 2008, 19), and sculptures of the Judgement of Paris appear on the *pulpitum* of the theatre of Sabratha in Libya (175–200 AD).

317 See Jones 2012; Webb 2002. These two types of performances shared a place in festivals, but mime involved speaking actors, whereas in a pantomime a silent actor danced wearing a mask (Vesterinen 2007, 56 and 138–9). Mime is associated with an audience of lower social status (Vesterinen 2007, 60 n. 157), whereas copious evidence shows that panto-

empire between the first and the sixth century AD.[318] Colluthus' epyllion dates to Anastasius' time, when pantomime was very popular and featured in many festivals,[319] where faction riots caused so much turmoil as to force a ban on pantomime shows in 502.[320]

All of the myths presented in Colluthus' *Abduction* represent ideal subjects for ethopoiiai and are included by Lucian in the repertoire of a skilled pantomime,[321] and the abduction of Helen is the only story to be mentioned three times in the dialogue.[322] Paris' judgement was a popular topic for pantomimes,[323] as well documented by contemporary artworks,[324] and the

mime was also popular with the literary world (Ov. *Trist.* 2.519; Nonn. *Dion.* 7.19–20). Mime is concerned with everyday-life sketches, whereas pantomime is centered on mythological or historical episodes.

318 Libanius' *Oration* 64, one of the main sources of information on pantomime, was written in Antioch (*Or.* 64.11.218), as was Lucian's *De Saltatione*, in response to Aelius Aristides' attack on dancers.

319 The Brytae festival took place in Constantinople, and it involved water spectacles, mime and pantomime (Greatrex and Watt 1999, 3–4 discuss the possible identification of the Brytae with the Edessa festival described by [John the Stylite]; see also Liebeschuetz 1998). At the Edessa festival (496–502) pagan myths were chanted, and an ὀρχηστής danced for three days, which was regarded as sinful and blamed for the famine and plague that hit the city (Jos. Styl. *Chron.* 30 (AD 498) and 27 (AD 496). The Maiuma festival took place from the third century AD in Antioch, Aphrodisias, and Rome, and it also involved water, mime and possibly pantomime (Belayche 2004; Greatrex and Watt 1999, 8–17). The festival of Chemmis took place in Panopolis and was held in honour of Perseus, identified with Horus or Min-Pan (Gonnelli 2003, 320 n. 1 and 321 n. 3); these games included, from the third century AD, poetic, on-stage and musical contests (Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 258–60).

320 Proc. Gaz. *Pan. Anast.* 16; see Chauvot 1986, 164.

321 Pantomime performers were expected to be familiar with mythology, history and literature, particularly Homer, Hesiod and the tragedians (Luc. *Salt.* 36–7, 61). The training of pantomime artists was time consuming and granted them better reputation than that of mime actors (Hunt 2008, 176). Cleopatra's story was considered "the last outpost of the "Greek rule" (Vesterinen 2007, 58): the erotic and dramatic nature of this historical milestone meets the requirements of a suitable topic for pantomime, and bridges the gap between myth and history.

322 The judgement of the goddesses (*Salt.* 45.8); the abduction of Helen (40.10, 45.8, 46.5); Phyllis and Demophon (40.9); Hyacinth (45.2); Erigone (40.4).

323 Tert. *Apol.* 15.2; Aug. *Civ. Dei* 18.10 (May 2008, 351).

324 The judgement portrayed on the fifth-century-AD pyxeis of Baltimore and of Zurich, as well as on a tenth-century-AD ivory casket, seem to reflect a scene from a mimic play (see pages 103–104).

myth is also the subject of the tenth book of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, an account of the performance of an unusual pantomime which is inserted within his novel and which provides us with comprehensive details of stage setting, props, roles of each actor, and actors' movements and steps.[325] The myth of Alcestis was also a favourite in late antiquity: we find it in the novel, in art, in tragedy,[326] and also in the *Alcestis Barcinonensis* papyrus,[327] a 122-hexameter poem in Latin dating from the fourth century AD, which shares with the *Abduction* many features of late-antique poetry, such as the influence of rhetoric and of scholastic progymnasmata.[328] The dramatisation of the myth, the

325 This *Judgement of Paris* has been defined as a meta-pantomime since Apuleius subverts the canons of the genre by introducing five solists (instead of one) and many extras, by cutting out the chorus, by making the presence of masks uncertain, and by including female dancers (May 2008, 339–46). The author plays with his subject (metamorphosis) by contrasting the expected reactions of the audience of the Corinthian festival to the performance, who they fully believe in the pantomime, with those of Lucius, who gradually realises that, as the spectacle is not quite as it seems, so his nature poses some limitations (he is a human who turns into a donkey who should act as a bull but fails to fully identify himself with his role and then turns back into a human). Although perfect identification between actors and their roles takes place in this pantomime, as pointed out several times by the author, full mimesis between reality and pantomime is prevented by Lucius' continuous remarks about the fictitious character of the performance (May 2008, especially 354–62). See also Webb 2008, 3–4.

326 In the Basilica of Herculaneum there is a painting of Alcestis and Admetus, a drawing of which is kept at Naples' Archaeological Museum (Hall 2008, 262, fig. 12.1). Also see discussion of the topic in the specific context of funerary art in Hall and Wyles 2008, 105. *POxy*. 4546 includes iambics attributed to Admetus from Euripides' *Alcestis* 344–82.

327 *P. Barcin. inv*. 158—161a. Marcovich 1988, 101 suggested that the Barcelona Alcestis may have come from Egypt, since Alcestis burns some Oriental spices while preparing her own funeral, and since this country was the main producer of papyri. This detail is used to hypothesise that the plot is transferred from Pherae in Thessaly (also the setting for Euripides' *Alcestis*). Hall 2008, 260–1 questions whether this may actually have been the origin of the libretto, since the myth of Alcestis was quite popular as a subject for pantomimes (Juvenal 6.652; Luc. *Salt*. 52), and the poem may have thus originated anywhere, although the actual papyrus was discovered in Spain. The myth also proved to be a popular topic for ethopoiiai and was suitable for Christian audiences and occasions (Nocchi Macedo 2014, 155 and 159–61). Although most scholarship agrees with Marcovich on the Egyptian provenance (Nocchi Macedo 2014, 18–24), the matter is still debated, and the papyrus, together with the *PBodm*. collection and others, may come from a library in Panopolis: on this see the comprehensive discussion in the forthcoming volume by Agosti, Buzi, and Camlani, and Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 218–223. A summary of the hypotheses is in Blanchard 1991, 213–14, n. 11.

328 Nocchi Macedo 2014, 147–57.

structural organisation of the text in five monodramas (where characters' roles never overlap), and the presence of rhetorical devices borrowed from progymnasmata led Hall to suggest that the text may be the only surviving pantomime libretto.[329] Hall's observations have been welcomed by scholars,[330] but the impossibility to prove that the text was conceived and in fact used as a libretto[331] has prompted more recent scholarship to focus instead on the ethopoietic character of this text,[332] due to its affinities with rhetorical and scholastic practices which involved performance.[333]

The connection between the topic of the judgement of Paris, public reading and performance can be extended to Ovid's epistulae 16 and 17, as most characters featured in the *Heroides* also appear in Lucian's list of popular topics for pantomimes,[334] and it has been argued that this work was performed on stage.[335] The judgement is also the subject of Dracontius' *Abduction of Helen*, a text clearly structured in five scenes and heavily influenced by the aesthetics

329 Hall 2008 and May 2008, 338; further evidence is inferred from the text's chronology, its provenance, its metre and the popularity of the myth as a topic for pantomime. The issue of the discrepancy between the physical origin of the papyrus and the origin of the poem itself does not apply to our epyllion, as Colluthus' text was discovered in Calabria by Cardinal Giovanni Bessarione in the fifteenth century. However, in the case of the *Abduction of Helen*, the generic consideration of Egypt as the main producer of papyri stands on stronger ground since we know that Colluthus was from Lycopolis, a semi-Hellenised town in the Egyptian Thebaid region, while the identity and provenance of the author of the *Alcestis Barcinonensis* is unknown.

330 E.g., Nocchi Macedo 2014, 73–5.

331 Hall 2008, 282.

332 Nocchi Macedo 2014, 74–5.

333 Nocchi Macedo 2014, 151–7. Agosti 2005a, 45 argues against the Christian ethopoietic poems of the *Bodmer* collection as scolastic products, although it cannot be excluded that they were used in a school environment. The myth of Alcestis is the topic of a rhetorical exercise named *Alcesta* (Hall 2008, 264 n. 15).

334 Hunt 2008, 169–84; Sargent 1996, 147. For a comprehensive analysis of the sources of Roman libretti, Hunt 2008, 169–184; Schlapbach 2008, 314–337; Panayotakis 2008, 185–97; Zimmermann 2008, 218–26.

335 In *Tristia* 2.519–10 and 2.25–30, Ovid blames Augustus as some of his works were staged as pantomime libretti; Cunningham and Sargent 1996 argued that the poems to which Ovid was referring were no other than his *Heroides*: Cunningham 1949, 100–106 argues as to why other works by Ovid cannot be the *poemata* to which he refers as *saltata* (*Trist*. 2.519). See also Hunt 2008, 176; Ingleheart 2008, 198–217. In *Rem. Am.* 751–6, Ovid says that love stories are danced and recommends broken hearts to avoid theatres: indeed the erotic and emotive content of the popular myths that were played on stage and their tragic end would justify his recommendation.

of pantomime,[336] and by ethopoiia.[337] The myth of Paris and Helen is also revived in an interesting ethopoiia of Severus of Alexandria, a patriarch who was almost a contemporary of Colluthus, who worded Menelaus' grief over Helen's departure.[338] The angle chosen by Severus is almost unique: in this monologue, which functions as a prequel to *Il.* 3.351–4, where Menelaus, during his duel with Paris, prays to Zeus to gain revenge over him, Severus chooses not to focus on the revenge topos, but on the contrast between the behaviour of Menelaus, which reflects Greek moral values, and Paris' impious and barbarian actions. The motif of Πάρις ξεναπάτης, which rests on a solid tradition,[339] is also present in Colluthus (ἀπατήλιος ἀνήρ 380), and Severus is, with Dracontius, the only other known source which mentions a storm in the journey of Paris. Interestingly, the *Alcestis Barcinonensis* shares many stylistic features with Dracontius' work: in particular, its ethopoietic character (for instance, Alcestis' ῥῆσις)[340] has been compared to Dracontius' *Orestis Tragoedia*, where a fierce Clytaemnestra is opposed to a cowardly Aegisthus through a series of responses spoken by characters in first person.[341] Dracontius also composed ethopoiiai:[342] it is not surprising that his *Abduction* is influenced by scholastic exercises and shares affinities with rhetoric,[343] and that his characters are dramatised through ethopoietic devices.

A survey of stylistic and narrative techniques employed by Colluthus suggests further similarities with ethopoiiai and pantomime, which used the same

336 Bright 1987, 219–20.

337 Nocchi Macedo 2014, 147. Dracontius also composed an ethopoiia on Heracles (*Rom.* 4) a poem on Achilles (*Rom.* 9), which is rather a *suasoria* with many ethopoietic features (Agosti 2005a, 51).

338 Sev. Alex. *Eth.* 3, on which see Amato and Ventrella 2009, 79–86.

339 The guilt of Paris, who failed to respect the obligations of hospitality, is well worded by Alcidamas in *Od.* 18.4–8 Avezzù Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ αὐτοῦ τὴν γυναῖκα ἐξαπατήσας, ἐκ τῶν οἴκων λαβὼν ὅσα πλεῖστα ἐδύνατο, ἀποπλέων ᾤχετο, οὐκ αἰδεσθεὶς οὔτε Δία ξένιον οὔτε θεῶν οὐθένα, ἄνομα καὶ βάρβαρα ἔργα διαπραξάμενος, ἄπιστα πᾶσι καὶ τοῖς ἐπιγιγνομένοις ἀκοῦσαι, "Alexander deceived his wife, took as much as he could from his house, and left by sea, lacking any respect for Zeus Xenios or for any other god, carrying out impious and barbarian actions, which would be hard to believe for posterity"; see also Alc. fr. 283 V; Ibyc. fr. 1a.10 P; Eur. *Tr.* 866; Hor. *Carm.* 1.15.2; Her. 3.115.4–5.

340 Nocchi Macedo 2014, 156–7.

341 For a discussion on the definition of ethopoiia (a monologue in the first person spoken by one of the two characters) and of ethopoietic character (the explosion of the characters' emotions to achieve a dramatic effect), see Nocchi Macedo 2014, 155–7.

342 See above n. 337.

343 De Gaetano 2009; Amato 2005.

rhetorical devices and content: the speaker of the progymnasma or declamatio impersonated a famous mythological or historical character (as in pantomime) and fought their case. The speech included some narrative in the third person: Colluthus' epyllion contains 16 speeches amounting to 36 per cent of the text, and the story is told through a series of monologues interposed with descriptions and some mythological digressions.

Some stylistic devices could also suggest a rhythm more suited to public reading.[344] In the *Abduction*, musical figures are numerous: alliteration is quite common (57, 71, 133–34, 159, 206, 226–27, 243, and 283), as are anaphora (95–96, 105–106, 128–29, 283–84) and assonance (71, 256–57). Rhetorical questions are also used by Colluthus (300, 150, 162, 188–89, 340 and 350) to engage the readership or audience, as is, as already discussed, the use of the anaphora of the negative comparison in the invective of Aphrodite after her victory, which exploits a rhetorical device typical of ethopoiiai, and widely employed by Nonnus.[345] Musaeus also includes a variety of ethopoietic speeches in his epyllion: the so-called τις-Rede (Hero's beauty is admired by a young man at 74–83); comparisons with mythological characters (135–57); the final monologue of Leander before he jumps into the sea (245–50).[346] It has been argued that, in the *Alcestis Barcinonensis*, alliteration, rhetorical questions, isoteleuton, avoidance of enjambment, anaphora and the repetition of similar words would have worked well with the rhythm of the *scabellum*:[347] for instance, the moment of Alcestis' death was emphasised on stage by long slow steps accompanied by long words.[348]

Monologues were naturally the format of ethopoiiai, the influence of which can be found in much late-antique literature, from John of Gaza to Nonnus,

344 On the musicality of hexameter see David 2006, 227–36; Wifstrand 1933. Andrieu 1954, 183–206 lists the figures that, especially in a dialogue, could suggest a scenic performance rather than silent reading; Mastromarco 1984, 19.

345 Agosti 2005a, 48–50.

346 Agosti 2005a, 50 points out also other speeches that are built in commatic style, such as *Her*. 174–93 and 203–220.

347 In pantomime, poetry, dance and music had to function together to achieve success. Pantomime was normally accompanied by a hand-percussion instrument (such as the τύμπανα or κύμβαλα, Lat. *scabellum*) or a wind instrument (like the αὐλός or σῦριγξ), sometimes with the addition of a κιθάρα and water organ: in any case the music was loud, very rhythmical and polyphonic (Vesterinen 2003, 47–8 and 2007, 58; for a comprehensive summary of the musical instruments accompanying dance, 185–94).

348 Hall 2008, 279–81. The presence of enjambment in Alcestis' role (in 112–16, where one sentence is composed of four hexameters) is justified with her role being the most dramatic and emotionally intense.

from Biblical epic to Claudian's invectives and panegyrics.[349] The relevance of monologues within pantomimes was noted in the 19th century by many scholars who believed that the word *canticum* implied a form of monologue, and who observed that the number of monologues that would have been included in the pantomime about the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite described by Lucian *Salt*. 63. *Oratio recta* offered the best medium for the dancer to express emotions and pathos. In Colluthus, the sections in which characters speak in the first person (e.g. Aphrodite's pre-contest speech, 87–98; Aphrodite's speech after her victory, 173–89, Hermione's dialogue 332–64, 374–77) stand out as monodramas which show the influence of publicly read works and of theatrical performance and can be interpreted as ethopoiiai. The *Alcestis Barcinonensis* is also clearly structured in five blocks of 7–13 hexameters corresponding to the main characters of the story (Admetus, Apollo, Admetus' father and mother, and Alcestis).

In some cases some information about a possible staging can be inferred by references to the props that the dancer may have used: when Aphrodite says: "I have my girdle, I ply my goad, I raise my bow" (96–7), the performer could be pointing at his attire; later (155–7), the dancer would have lifted his robe to show Aphrodite's chest (a prop). Aphrodite begins her speech to the Loves by expressing her concern over the outcome of the contest (88): δειμαίνω, τίνι μῆλον ὁ βουκόλος οὗτος ὀπάσσει, "I fear to whom this shepherd will award the apple"; the context is very similar to that of Ap. *Met*. 10.30. where the dancer impersonating Venus says *frustra me pastor ille, cuius iustitiam fidemque magnus comprobavit Iuppiter, ob eximiam speciem tantis praetulit deabus*, "So it was all in vain that shepherd, whose justice and trustworthiness were confirmed by great Jupiter, preferred me for my surpassing beauty to such powerful goddesses". In both passages, a precise reference to the character of Paris—ὁ βουκόλος οὗτος and *pastor ille*—does not only suggest a possible performative context for Colluthus' text, but could also reveal an actual pointing gesture to another nearby performer.

A structure based on monodramas succeeds in presenting a dramatic and dynamic story narrated by its characters. Dramatisation was also a key requirement for plots destined to pantomime: mythological stories were first carefully chosen on the basis of their erotic and pathetic potential, and then emotionally enhanced in order to elicit a wide range of emotions in the audience. Lucian praises the effects of a performance in which spectators will benefit

349 Agosti 2005, 37–50.

from watching sorrowful topics[350] and Libanius tells us that death also featured regularly in pantomime shows as the ultimate generator of pathos.[351] This is a focal point of distinction between pantomime and tragedy, since in tragedy the presence of corpses or dying bodies was treated in a completely different manner, and death took place almost always off stage. Hall notes how Alcestis' death is expressed firstly by her preparing her own pyre and arranging the perfumes to burn, then through progressively slower movements and stiffer positions, and longer words, all conveying the idea of a death-dance.[352]

An audience listening to an ethopoiia, or watching a performance, would have engaged with the dramatisation of abstract concepts expressed or made visual through concrete images or objects, personifications, bodily parts, movements, gestures.[353] This late-antique poetic pattern, widely present in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*,[354] is also found in Colluthus: sleep and death are personified as two brothers (366–8);[355] the night is personified as she opens the two gates (concrete objects) of dreams (abstract concept) at 318–23;[356] Eris is given a

350 Luc. *Salt*. 79 ὁπόταν τι οἰκτρὸν καὶ ἐλεεινὸν φαίνηται, "whenever anything is represented that calls for sorrow or compassion". See also Choricius *Ap*. 116–17, 31, 113, and 102 on the relaxing effects of the theatre (Webb 2008, 169).

351 Lib. *Or*. 64.110. Death on stage was not only accepted but also expected in pantomime: in AP 9.254 Lucilius attributed the failure of a performance to the fact that the dancer did not actually kill himself on stage while impersonating Niobe. See May 2008, 351; Coleman 1990.

352 Hall 2008, 274–5.

353 Quintilian (*Inst. Or*. 11.3.102) disapproves of the Greek habit of orators whose gestures are overdone and synchronised with their words in a rhythmical way: this disapproval explains the difference between an orator and a librettist, who would have aimed at matching text musicality and words' shape to gestures (Hall 2008, 278–81). Colluthus' epyllion, as the *Alcestis Barcinonensis*, does not include specific choreographic directions.

354 Miguélez-Cavero 2013b.

355 In Nonnus, Sleep and Wine are parters in crime for Dionysus, who regularly benefits from their help to seduce women (Nicaea, Aura, Ariadne) and enemies (Indians); Miguélez-Cavero 2013b, 360.

356 Nonnus uses his representation of the Seasons in *Dion*. 11 and 12 to express that only after the metamorphosis of Ampelus into a vine, and the subsequent gift of wine is brought to humankind by Dionysus, cosmic balance will be complete. "Dionysus' cosmic role becomes more physical because of the anthropomorphic description of the Seasons: one of the four women lacks her characteristic iconographic element (Autumn needs her vine leaves)" (Miguélez-Cavero 2013b, 356–8).

body and compared to a heifer stung by a gadfly (41–45);[357] and her anger and envy are expressed quite physically in the passage that follows (46–63) through a series of gestures and movements: she cannot sit still in her chair, and she thinks of different plans to disrupt the banquet of the gods, until she finally throws in the golden apple. Public speakers and *saltatores* used their gesturality to imitate things, unlike actors of tragedy, who used their gestures to express abstract ideas. Personifications are also used in the *Alcestis Barcinonensis*, in which destiny is embodied by two sisters who break the thread of fate (4), and gesturality is also used, e.g. when Admetus' father points at his own eyes, and Admetus' mother at her womb alluding to childbirth.

Looking at Hermione's tearful awakening in Colluthus, the episode revolves around a series of gestures and emphatic questions that the girl addresses to herself and her maids, in a structure that is reminiscent of ethopoiiai, where characters also questioned themselves and others absent interlocutors to captivate the audience.[358] Hermione answers those questions, too. She suggests possible scenarios and she disbelieves them. She cries herself to sleep. She has a dream, and she even speaks in the dream, asking Helen what has happened. Helen replies blaming Paris; this revelation awakens Hermione, and again, she voices her decision to address a message to Menelaus. Her monologue is an ethopoiia entitled "Which words would have Hermione said when she discovered that her mother had left?", a question which is answered by Colluthus at 332–34 and 349–64. The terrible enigma around Helen's unknown destiny (353) forces the child to attempt to find a resolution. There is no need for description in this dynamic scene: characters move fast, dramatically and visually re-creating frightful scenarios for the public: an abandoned corpse in the woods, a floating body in the waters, a lost woman who cannot find her way home at night, a lawless kidnapper who has broken into a house. Pathos is further enhanced by the fact that all is told by the voice of a helpless child and by the language chosen by Colluthus for this specific passage: the child repeats herself, insists on her status of abandoned daughter and does not contemplate the possibility that her mother has left her willingly until the end.

Close analysis of the text's compatibility with stage performance suggests that bringing this text to the stage would not have represented a challenging task.

357 In the *Dionysiaca* Eris plays a small role in 5.41 and 20.35–98 (Hopkinson and Vian 1994, 5–6; Miguélez-Cavero 2013b, 359 n. 37), and her characterisation is very theatrical, as that of an actor who overplays his role (Auger 2003, 423).

358 As also noted by Agosti 2005a, 50.

The location changes a number of times (Mount Ida, Sparta, Troy), but all the locations could have been made understood to the audience through dance and mime. For instance, the change of location at 193, when Paris sets off on his journey to Sparta, could have been mimed by the actor with a rowing movement. The apparent obstacle of representing a change of location on stage could easily be overcome by misrepresenting the exact architecture, or by juxtaposing on stage places that were in reality not proximate to each other.[359]

Pantomimes wore a neutral-coloured tunic or χλαῖνα,[360] which facilitated fast adaptation to the next character through the addition of a new mask and some props; thus, the role of Paris would have been accessorised with a club and a goat's skin, and when the actor had to switch to Aphrodite's role, he would have added an elaborate wig and a prop simulating her breasts.

The number of artists required for a pantomime performance[361] varied according to the type of venue destined to host the show.[362] In the *Alcestis Barcinonensis* there are five characters, a number that is in line with Lucian.[363] The roles never overlap: the dancer would thus have interpreted each role in a sequence. In the *Abduction* there are three main characters (Aphrodite, Helen and Paris) in addition to Zeus, Hermes, Athena, Hera, Hermione and the maids. The play contains the minimum number of roles (4), but the high number of roles may seem out of the ordinary and poses some questions. However, some

359 Speaking of Herodas' mime 4, Mastromarco 1984, 62 examines how the stage may have been set to simultaneoulsy represent the outside and the inside of Asclepius' shrine.

360 Wyles 2008, 61–86 and Vesterinen 2007, 57.

361 Quintilian 6.3.65 speaks of a second dancer. See Hall 2002, 29 and 2008, 267 n. 23.

362 As with mimes, venues for pantomimes depended on the sponsor of the show, thus if the client was a rich aristocrat at the Alexandrian court, his luxurious living room could have been an appropriate location. In Pompeii a living room that was undergoing extensive renovations at the time of the Vesuvius' eruption (69 AD), and which apparently belonged to Poppaea (Hall and Wyles 2008, 16). Obviously, if a pantomime was being performed at a theatre in front of a large audience, the dancer may have been accompanied by a chorus rather than by a solo singer. Mastromarco 1984, 65 and 94–5 argues that Herodas' mimiambs may have been performed in either a theatre for the benefit of thousands of spectators, or at the court of Alexandria, in some wealthy house at the presence of selected aristocratic elite; Herodas probably designed his texts just for scenic performance, and their written circulation probably took place without the author's supervision, but thanks to the goodwill of whoever was interested in keeping a copy of the mimiambs. Although these observations relate to a much earlier text, something similar may have happened to late-antique pantomime spectacles, and to Colluthus' poem.

363 In *Salt*. 67 Lucian says that the average number of masks used in pantomime shows is said to be five; in Chrinag. *AP* 9.542 a plot is shaped for Bathyllus so that it offered four roles or more. See Hall 2008, 265, and Vesterinen 2007, 57.

roles such as that of the maid speaking may have been sung by the chorus, while the dancer continued to play Hermione, thus expressing her reaction to the maids' words. A similar scenario has been suggested by Hall for Admetus in the *Alcestis Barcinonensis*, who could have been played by an assistant actor, since Admetus does not express himself as intensely as the other characters, and his position (lying on a couch and kneeling) would not have been challenging to hold for an assistant. Something similar may also have happened with Hermes' role: his speech to Paris may have been sung by the chorus or by the solo singer accompanying the pantomime. In both scenes, the chorus would have allowed the dancer to express his emotions in a more consequential way: thus Hermione would have reacted to the maids' speech expressing shock, despair, fear, hope, deception, and Paris would have been allowed to continue acting as the naive shepherd who listens to his assignment.

The contrast between the speed of the dancers' skilful steps (κινήσεις) and the stillness of their statuesque poses (σχέσεις) in moments of transition created a living picture at a moment in time[364] and worked effectively as an unequivocal signal for spectators that a new scene with potentially new characters[365] was about to be introduced. The change of mask and accessories took the dancer less than sixty seconds.[366] In the *Alcestis Barcinonensis*, identifying the times for mask changes is simple, as the next character is announced between monologues;[367] a similar analysis proves more challenging for the *Abduction*, as speeches alternate with narrative parts. These may be allocated to the solo singer (who would have performed a similar role to that of the herald described by Augustine in *Doct. Christ.* 2.38.97).

What consequences would a performance on stage have for Colluthus' text? In a performance of the *Judgement of Paris* danced in a Corinthian theatre,[368] each role was played by a different dancer, and female roles were played by female actors (Ap. *Met.* 10.29–34). This type of performance justifies how pantomime is generally considered the antecedent of modern ballet. Female entertainers are very widely attested to between the fourth and the

364 Plut. *Mor.* 747c.

365 For masks in pantomime see Webb 2008, 43–60.

366 Cascione 2009, discussed in Hall 2008, 266: Sara Cascione choreographed an experimental version of the *Barcelona Alcestis* as a pantomime in 1999.

367 Hall 2008, 268–70 identified mask changes at lines 11, 21, 31, 42 and 71, where the actor would have impersonated Admetus, then Apollo, Admetus' father, Admetus' mother, and finally Alcestis.

368 Hall 2002, 29 n. 95.

sixth century AD,[369] the empress Theodora being probably the most popular example.[370] Certainly the intensity of the visual impact of the scenes would be increased if we imagine them represented on stage. Characters act based on what looks best to them; therefore, in the case of the beauty contest, the consequences of Paris' decision would be even clearer if we project the scene being acted by two average-looking dancers, one exceptionally sexy dancer, and a naive shepherd. The visual impact of a topless character would actually make Aphrodite's victory triumphal on stage, as the dancer acting her part would stand out beside armoured Athena and anonymous Hera. The audience would have expected and welcomed Paris' choice. This is precisely the scenario described by Apuleius in *Met.* 10.31, when he introduces the actress who plays the role of Aphrodite in his pantomime at the time of the judgement:

> Super has introcessit alia, visendo decore praepollens, gratia coloris ambrosei designans Venerem, qualis fuit Venus, cum fuit virgo, nudo et intecto corpore perfectam formositatem professa, nisi quod tenui pallio bombycino inumbrabat spectabilem pubem. Quam quidem laciniam curiosulus ventus satis amanter nunc lasciviens reflabat, ut dimota pateret flos aetatulae, nunc luxurians aspirabat, ut adhaerens pressule membrorum voluptatem graphice liniaret. Ipse autem color deae diversus in speciem, corpus candidum, quod caleo demeat, amictus caerulus, quod mari remeat.

> After these another girl made her entrance, surpassingly beautiful to look at, with a charming ambrosial complexion, representing Venus as Venus looked when she was a virgin. She displayed a perfect figure, her body naked and uncovered except for a piece of sheer silk with which she veiled her comely charms. An inquisitive little breeze would at one moment blow this veil aside in wanton playfulness so that it lifted to reveal the flower of her youth, and at another moment it would gust exuberantly against it so that it clung tightly and graphically delineated her body's voluptuousness. Moreover, the very colouring of the goddess offered variety to the eye-her body white because she comes down

369 See Webb 2002, 286–7, and Vesterinen 2007, 62 and 133–5 for gender-related considerations about female performers.

370 Although Procopius' testimony is the result of a rather subjective perspective: see e.g. Proc. *Hist. Arc.* 1.4, (Kaldellis 2010, 3), 9.1–46 (Kaldellis 2010, 40–45), 12.14 (Kaldellis 2010, 58).

from heaven, her robe blue because she comes up from the sea" (transl. J.A. Hanson).

The appearance of the dancer playing Aphrodite must have left very little to the imagination, and beside two less-than-perfect actresses, her invective would have been perceived as much more poignant. Another element of interest in Apuleius' description of the actress is colour: the fact that her colouring is highlighted, while that of the other two actresses is not, suggests that she alone wore colourful garments, so that the audience's eyes would have naturally been drawn to her.

Apuleius' *Judgement of Paris* shares other features with the *Abduction*: here, too, fiction is broken several times by the author and by Lucius to discourage readership and audience from fully identifying actors with their roles and performance with reality.[371] Apuleius' readers are never allowed to forget that everything on stage is a fiction, just as Colluthus does: for instance, Apuleius engages the audience in agreeing that the actress really looked like Minerva (*Met.* 10.30) and Colluthus apologises to Dionysus for praising Paris' beauty (252).

Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* reflects features which are typical of both ethopoiia and pantomime, and there is nothing preventing us from imagining that, precisely because of its suitability to a public reading, the text may have been used for a pantomime performance independently from the poet's intention, perhaps after his death or at any rate as distinct from its fruition as a literary text, as happened to Ovid's *Heroides* or to Virgil's *Aeneid*. This consideration would offer a different perspective on the purpose of visuality and action within the plot. The solo dancer would mime the gesticulation and movements imitating, for instance, Aphrodite styling her hair, while the solo singer would chant the lines describing the clasp and gold. If we hypothesise that the poem was used for pantomimes, the descriptions of each character's appearance, far from lessening the visual effect on the audience, actually increase the visual impact. The public would see, and hear about, the hairstyle, matching the information from the dance and from the song, and compensating for what dance could not tell with the words being sung. The synergy between the language of sculpture and poetry described by Lada-Richards[372] would actually have taken place on stage in this way, and no piece of information would have been missed in the process. In this metatextual epyllion, the story is narrated in a text format as

371 May 2008, 346–53.

372 Lada-Richards 2003, 3–37.

if it were a character impersonation, or a performance about that same story, or a painting displaying the same story.[373] The poet imitates performance or art, and the whole story is mimed for the reader: characters act, and the poet describes them as they act to his audience. This textual framework would not have been new in poetry: Colluthus uses fiction-breaking devices such as indirect address to the audience and auctorial intervention in the narration.[374]

The quality of Colluthus' text seems truly too high to suggest a composition for the stage;[375] however, while one cannot be certain about the precise occasion(s) of the text, there can be little doubt that the poet was heavily influenced by other publicly read or performed contemporary genres such as ethopoiiai and pantomime at the time of composing the *Abduction*.

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373 A beautiful painting, described in the proem, inspires Longus to tell the story of Daphnis and Chloe. Achilles Tatius also begins his novel with the ekphrasis of a painting of the abduction of Europa. In both cases the ekphrasis functions as a pretext or an incipit to begin the account (Webb 2009b, 178–80); both novels can be thus read as long ekphraseis. See Frangoulis 2014, 169–78 and 189–92 for a recent overview of the function of ekphrasis in the novel and in Nonnus, and Létoublon 1993, 158–60 for text as a mirror of the novel. Zeitlin 2013, 24 discusses the shared effect achieved by both Aphrodite's epiphany and her statue in Char. 3.5.3–4, where the textual ambiguity prevents any differentiation between the goddess' full divine presence and her representation and her artificial replica (Callirhoe).

374 See more on this in Chapter 4.

375 For an industry of such popularity and with such a high turnover in the entertainment world, no actual libretto has survived, which makes any judgement very challenging. However, some sources confirm that librettos did not have a great reputation as quality texts: Seneca (*Suas*. 2.19) speaks of the son of one of his associates who wasted his talent on writing stories for dancing (*fabulae salticae*). According to Lucian (*Salt*. 74), instead, a pantomime dancer should choose his librettos for their quality: the question raised by these two opposite perspectives can easily be explained with the fact that Lucian was writing an apology for the genre and was thus biased.

CHAPTER 4

# Colluthus' Polyphonic Epyllion

The *Abduction of Helen's* structure, organised in scenes individually enjoyable, has already been highlighted by many scholars and by this work. In the past scholars have criticised Colluthus' unconcern with chronological order, but today his selection of the most dramatic stages of the story is praised as a winning technique that fits the format of a short epyllion perfectly.[1] In fact, Colluthus' choice to delve into the least-told but most pathetically-charged parts (such as Hermione's role), and to build on side-events such as Paris' journey to Sparta exploiting its ekphrastic potential, works well towards creating the effect of a dynamic text that switches seamlessly across scenes as well as genres: we have seen Colluthus playing with bucolic poetry in the proem, with rhetoric in Aphrodite's speech, among other genres.

The epyllion's multicoloured nature is in line with Nonnus' ideal of ποικιλία as expressed in the *Dionysiaca*'s proem centred on the multifaceted figure of Proteus,[2] a model for ever-changing pantomime actors, and Colluthus made the most of many devices such as genres, vocabularies and narrative techniques such as digression and allusion to create the effect of variety within his poem. There is little time to be bored between changes of scenery, of characters, of linguistic register in the space of less than four hundred lines.[3]

An important element that contributes to achieving this variety effect is the effective employment of narrative techniques[4] such as the switch of voice (whoever is speaking) across the poem, the addresses to readers, the direct or indirect address that characters employ in unmatched contexts, and the emotionally-focussed use of direct speech within the poem. Colluthus provides different points of view by letting his characters speak,[5] as well as by allowing his

1 For episodic narrative as a common feature of late antique epic see Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 12–13.

2 Shorrock 2008, 102–3.

3 It is interesting to note that in Claudian's *Rapt.* 3.13, Proteus attends the wedding of Pluto and Proserpina, but he had decided to adhere to one appearance: *certo mansurum Protea vultu*.

4 For the definitions in this chapter I refer to Porter Abbott 2008, 67–99; Herman 2007, 3–108; Bal 1997, especially 3–10 and 142–61; and De Jong, Nünlist and Bowie 2004, xv-10.

5 There are 16 speeches in the poem: Zeus (lines 71–7), Aphrodite (86–98, 160–6, 172–89), Hermes (128–31), Athena (139–45), Hera (148–53), Helen (268–77, 308–16, 379–80), Paris (280–304), Hermione (332–4, 349–64, 374–7, 383–6), maids (338–47).

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own voice to be heard; he acknowledges his narratees, he addresses divinities (Dionysus, the Nymphs) and mythological characters (Phyllis); he makes his characters speak to other characters as if they were not there (Paris speaks of Helen as a reward to Helen herself) or as if they were (Hermione interrogates Helen—who is absent—while speaking to her maids).

The employment of these techniques is part of the earlier epic tradition: Homer first employed many of them, and so did Apollonius, Callimachus[6] and also late antique poets; Colluthus chooses the devices he borrows to achieve different effects that all share dynamism and pathos. We hear many voices aside from Colluthus', and also different versions of the same story:[7] this contributes to constructing a polyphonic text, a multicoloured story that is told by different people at different times, and most of which is not narrated by the same voice. Colluthus enjoys narrating when this involves ekphrastic descriptions that offer him the opportunity to display his erudition, as for instance the wedding of Thetis and Peleus (17–40), the geographic scenery of Paris' journey to Sparta (193–250), the digressions about Hyacinth (240–48) and when narration is centred on particularly picturesque moments, such as the behaviour and formidable plans of furious Eris (41–63). When it comes to speeches, however, Colluthus prefers direct to indirect speech,[8] limiting his role to adding a short comment after or before each character has spoken.[9] His choice ensures that the plot becomes current and vivid for the readers,[10] who hear many of the characters' voices telling the story and are not simply told of what happens by the narrator.

In the previous chapter, I have defended the possibility that Colluthus may have been influenced by rhetorical exercises and by contemporary forms of theatrical performances such as pantomime: his preference for techniques such as direct speech, direct addresses and apostrophes may add further evidence to this. In particular, the choice of a style rich in pathos, where words

6 Harder 2012, 51–6.

7 For instance, Hermes gives directions on the beauty criteria to be followed by Paris, but he uses different criteria; the goddesses undermine each other's offers to Paris; Paris tells Helen about the promise Aphrodite had made to him; Helen lies about the circumstances of her "abduction", after we witness the facts.

8 Callimachus also relies on a direct speech for the key moments of the story in *Aetia* (Harder 2012, 55–6).

9 As τοίην συνθείην καλλίσφυρος ἔννεπε νύμφη, "such is the agreement the fair-ankled lady proposed", 317.

10 Compare the role of young Callimachus as the curious reader in *Aet.* 1–2 (Harder 2012, 53).

describing feelings of joy and pain are crammed together,[11] is a standard feature of ethopoiiai in particular.[12] What cannot be questioned is the poet's concern with bringing the story to life for his readers: when Paris tells Helen: "it is for her sake that I have endured to cross so many seas" (297), he is really addressing his audience of readers, and his statement comes across ironically, as we shall see later. Equally, when Hermione stops speaking to her maids to call upon Helen, who is no longer in the house, the child's cry is heard by us readers. In fact, if we picture the two scenes as performed on stage, the techniques used by Colluthus gain power from the physical presence of an audience that the characters can actually address. A similar conclusion can be drawn about Ovid's *Heroides* 9: in 143–144, Deianira's narrative is suddenly interrupted by the news of Heracles' death. The theatrical potential of these lines, which would seem much more effective if we picture them as being played on stage, is unquestionably aided by the choice of this narrative technique.[13]

In the first part of this chapter, I shall explore the narrative features of the *Abduction of Helen*, and their relation to previous tradition; in the remaining sections I shall focus on two narrative techniques (addresses and use of direct speech) used by Colluthus to achieve different effects on readers' perception and to implicitly provide information about his characters' emotional journey in order to ultimately enhance the pathos and vividness of the scene. For Colluthus' use of direct speech, I examine the case-study of Helen[14] to demonstrate the psychological underlying factors and the evaluation of the character's behaviour that can be drawn from it.

A precious instrument for my analysis is comparison with previous epic tradition (Homer, Apollonius, Claudian, Triphiodorus, Musaeus and Christodorus); Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina* and Musaeus' epyllion *Hero and Leander*, in particular, share with Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* a similar topic and the preference for the same narrative techniques. The context and the effect achieved in these literary contexts are similar, which could suggest that the features of late-antique epyllia were by the late fifth century AD standardised.

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11 This is the so-called commatic style, defined by Nicolaus of Myra (Felten p. 66, in Kennedy 2003, 166), and widely used by Nonnus (especially with regard to the presence of direct speeches: Agosti 2005a, 46–47).

12 Agosti 2005a, 47.

13 Cunningham 1949, 100–6.

14 I have chosen Helen's role because she is the one who takes least part in the narrative: her role is almost entirely consumed by her speeches, and Colluthus' narrative concerning her is minimal.

## 1 The Narratology of Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*

Colluthus' narrative approach follows closely that of Homer and Apollonius; in the *Abduction*, almost every narrative technique that had previously been used in epic tradition is employed. What appears from the overall consideration of the poem from this perspective is the originality of Colluthus' purpose.

In Colluthus' epyllion, the narrator[15] is external, overt and omniscient: he, who identifies himself as the poet in the proem (μοι at 6 and in the narratorial intervention-apology to Dionysus at 252–3) knows the full story from the very beginning; in fact, his numerous questions to the Muses in the proem already contain the answer that he is demanding: νηῶν ἀρχεκάκων of line 8 already indicates that these ships were up to no good, and νείκεος ἀρχή of line 10 already refers to a feud, like δικασπολίη in 12. This approach follows Homer, who was a similar type of narrator (although less overt later on in the *Iliad*):[16] he also invokes the Muses in his proems as well as in *Il.* 11.218–20, and addresses one of his characters, Patroclus, in *Il.* 16.692–3. On the other hand, Apollonius' approach is also that of an omniscient narrator, but more overt and self-aware than Homer, as he interacts with his narratees and the Muses constantly, compensating with this for the physical distance that separated him from his readers.[17] Callimachus also reveals himself as omniscient in dialoguing with the Muses in *Aet.* 1–2[18] and with Delos in *h.* 4.1–10 and 82–5, and shows even more self-awareness than Apollonius in his commitment to his patron-god and his genre.[19] In Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina*, the narrator is both overt and omniscient, as we see from the preface of his book 2, where he tells us that the poet returned to play his lyre once again to compose a festive work.[20]

The narrator knows his characters' inner emotions inside out and can read their psychological turmoil through their actions: Eris is prey to the pangs of jealousy (44); her desire to create trouble is revealed by ἤθελεν (in *positio princeps* at 49 and 52) and ἐμήσατο (55); her fear is exposed by δειμαίνουσα (58). Paris' feelings are also under scrutiny as he, too, is frightened at 124 and 127,

15 With narrator I refer here to the primary narrator. The second narrator will be indicated as such.

16 De Jong 2004, 14. For the discussion about Homer's active but implicit evaluative interventions, see De Jong 2004, 17.

17 Apollonius in fact interacts also with his oral sources; see Cuypers 2004, 43, 61–2.

18 Harder 2012, 52–3.

19 Harder 2004, 63–4.

20 Claud. *Rapt.* Pref. 2.13–16.

and his intentions as he bathes before his meeting with Helen are revealed at 233–4. We have already seen how Helen's emotions are made visible through her gestural behaviour; in particular, at 260–4 the narrator exposes her attempts at guessing Paris' identity. The narrator knows that she is already attracted to Paris (Πάριν ποθέουσα 278), that she is amazed by him (θαμβήσασα 267 and 307), and that she is lost for words (ἀμηχανέουσα 306). The narrator of the Homeric poems also knows his characters' emotions quite well, like our narrator: for instance, Eris restrains herself from her plans in 53, like Odysseus restrains himself in *Od.* 17.235–8.

The narrator's omniscience is also clearly confirmed by some instances of prolepsis, where he alludes to later events: Hermione asks her mother whether she has followed Aphrodite (377), showing a glimpse of truth that had not occurred to her before, and in 388 her wandering is described as in vain by the narrator, who clearly knows how things would go from there.[21] Homer also uses prolepsis, for instance in *Il.* 11.604.[22] In Claudian, the narrator's omniscience is also overt: Proserpina weaves in vain a gift for her mother, and in vain she calls upon the clouds; Proserpina is the glory of her mother, "soon to be her sorrow"; secondary narrator Ceres recalls how she lamented and prayed in vain, blaming herself for not having guessed how things would go.[23]

Occasionally, as in Apollonius,[24] the narrator temporarily forgets or pretends to forget his omniscience: this can be inferred especially from his use of indefinites, as in 45, where Eris is wondering how she could ever disturb the banquet of the gods and whether the gods will leap up in fear (56), and in three instances in which Zeus and Paris ask their interlocutors whether they have ever heard of Hermes, Troy and Priam (71, 280, 282). In his digression on Phyllis, the narrator tells her of how she waited for whenever Demophon would return home (218): he of course knows that he will not return.[25] Reported speech is also

21 The multiple occurrences of ἀρχή, πρῶτος and their compounds (9, 10, 62, 197, 394) should also be mentioned here, as they imply that the narrator not only knows how the story goes, but has also evaluated responsibilities and identified the root cause of the strife.

22 De Jong 1987, 86–89.

23 Claud. *Rapt.* 1.246, 2.249, 2.37 and 3.228–9.

24 Cuypers 2004, 51.

25 In some instances, ποτε is used to refer to an indefinite time, but these vague references cannot be attributed to the narrator's willingness to feign ignorance about the exact time when Hyacinth and Apollo played together (242) and when Poseidon and Apollo laid the foundations of Troy (308): in my opinion, he rather wishes to keep the distance from those events and to highlight Helen's amazement at the novelty of them. This last point is also supported by his use of κεῖνα in 310: the beautiful buildings she wishes to see are distant in place and time. See Cuypers 2004, 55–6.

employed to feign the narrator's ignorance of the development of the events: however, he is not questioning his authority (as Apollonius does as a Muse-inspired bard, resorting to historiographical evidence to persuade his narratees of the veracity of his story)[26] but he is once again confirming that he knows his characters' emotions inside out as well as his own omniscience, as the narrator knows more than the characters do of their future. In the first instance Hermione thinks that she is seeing her mother (μητέρα παπταίνειν ὠίσατο 372); in the second Helen believes that she is looking at the golden youth who attends to Cytherea (ἄλλοτε δὴ χρύσειον ὀισαμένη Κυθερείης / κοῦρον ὀπιπεύειν θαλαμηπόλον 260–1): the narrator implies that in both cases they are not seeing the persons they believe they are seeing. In contrast to Apollonius 1.196,[27] however, our narrator refers to a character's critical thinking, not his own, therefore once again indirectly establishing his omniscience that goes beyond the characters' knowledge.

The use of φημί in the poem is interesting: in all instances (90, 142, and 174), a secondary narrator comments on other characters' reputation, refusing to acknowledge it and somehow questioning it.

In terms of evaluations, the narrator presents his view on how his characters behave very often: Paris is labelled as Δύσπαρις (194), by virtue of his unlucky romances but also of the consequences of his lust on others. This definition also works as a prequel to the Paris of the *Iliad*, where Hector describes him as a μέγα πῆμα, "a great pain" for the Trojans and foresees that no one will mourn his death (6.281–5), and reiterates his guilty role as a bearer of misfortune by addressing him as δαιμόνιε (326–30). The narrator also tells us that Paris exults exceedingly in Aphrodite's promise (κυδιόων δ' ὑπέροπλον ὑποσχεσίῃ Κυθερείης 326): here, once again, his judgement is based on what will happen in the future, providing an implied prolepsis of the events. Aphrodite's lack of modesty is also judged heavily and indicated twice by the narrator: οὐκ ᾐδέσσατο Κύπρις … καὶ οὐκ ἐμνήσατο μαζῶν (156–8). On three occasions the narrator speaks of events that took place in spite of the characters' nature preventing them, playing with the narratees' expectations and somehow seeking to surprise them with an unexpected course of events: Artemis attends the wedding in spite of being a huntress (ἀγροτέρη περ ἐοῦσα 35); Eris gives in to Ares

26 Apollonius' narrator is half-Homeric in presenting himself as a Muse-inspired singer, and half-Herodotean in his constant references to autoptic evidence and oral sources; this sometimes leads to the paradoxes of especially *Arg*. 1.23–5 and 1.153–5, see Cuypers 2004, 49–50, 61–62.

27 Cuypers 2004, 51.

although she was untamed (ἀμαιμακέτη περ ἐοῦσα 53);[28] Poseidon and Apollo come to serve Dardanus although they are immortal (ἀθάνατοί περ ἐόντες 288); and Hermione speaks, however prey to anguish (ἀχνυμένη περ ἐοῦσα 373). Similarly, Troy opens its gates to the pair who will cause the city much trouble, in spite of Cassandra's prophecy but also in spite of what narratees and narrator alike would have expected (Τροίη δ' 393).

The narrator also provides his views on concepts: at 230 he comments that Paris' crew tied the anchors tight as is the custom of those who work at sea; at 227 narratees are told that from that point, the journey was not long at all, therefore judging the distance and evaluating how long it would have taken for Paris' crew to reach Sparta. Homer also provides evaluative comments (more frequently in the *Odyssey*),[29] as in *Il.* 2.35–40 and *Od.* 20.291.

Gnomai are rarely uttered by the narrator, as in Apollonius,[30] but curiously our narrator insists on sleep and dreams: in 318–23 we find the image of the double gates of dreams, the truthful and the deceitful ones, and in 366–70 that of brothers Death and Sleep.[31] More often, gnomai are uttered by secondary narrators: in 302–305, Paris says: "Women born among the Argives are not like you: for although they grow with weaker limbs, they look like men, and are just counterfeit women", a statement that recalls closely that which is uttered by Aphrodite at 187–89: "Don't you know that the Athenas like you are much more impotent when, while exulting in glorious wars, they realise that their body is not men's nor women's?" Aphrodite is in fact the narrator who utters most gnomai: "that girdle, from where women catch my sting of desire, and travail many times, but never to the point of death" (97–98), "It is thanks to beauty that women triumph by far" (163). Athena also makes a statement: "A leader commands the valiant and the peaceful. The winners are not always those who praise Athena. The slaves of Enyo fall into an early grave!" 151–3. Homer also makes himself seen through gnomai, for instance in *Il.* 16.688–90.

In Colluthus' poem, the narrative is subsequent (events are told after they have occurred); in fact, they are told two eras after they took place, as the events surrounding the rape of Helen are presented as the antecedent of the Trojan War, which, as we gather from the final lines of the epyllion, has also already taken

28 A possible model for this may be Pluto who reluctantly yields to Lachesis, *quamvis indocilis flecti* in Claud. *Rapt.* 1.69.

29 De Jong 2004, 16.

30 Cuypers 2004, 53.

31 For more on these images see further in this chapter.

place ("But Troy unlocked the bolts of her high-built gates and welcomed back on his return the citizen who will be the first cause of her ruin", 393–4).

In the proem, the narrator addresses the Nymphs in the first person. The narrative is organised in a sequence of questions (lines 5–13) which creates a fiction where the narrator pretends to ignore or forget the causes of the whole story (when, where, why). He also states clearly that he wants to find out exactly the primary cause (10) of the feud, thus both setting and sharing expectations with the narratees about the nature of this curiosity. Aetiology is then established as a primary interest of the narrator and the clear trigger to narration, as in Callimachus' *Aetia* 1–2, where the story is told to satisfy Callimachus (secondary narratee) who questions the Muses (secondary narrators),[32] or in *h.* 4.1–10.[33] Claudian had also structured the proem of his *Abduction of Proserpina* with an invocation to the gods followed by a series of questions.[34]

With regard to closure of the narrative, it could be argued whether the narration actually comes to an end or not: the event that the narrator had set out to cover in the title and in the proem, i.e. the rape of Helen, is told in full by the end of the poem; however, the last four lines open a path for what comes after, almost introducing a sequel to the story. The narrator meets the expectations that he had set up in his narrative, but he also engages with his narratees by confirming to them what happens next.

Moreover, the very last line (δέξατο νοστήσαντα τὸν ἀρχέκακον πολιήτην 394) refers back to νηῶν ἀρχεκάκων of the proem (9–10), sealing a ring composition also reinforced by νοστήσαντα, "returning": the narrator begins and closes his narrative by confirming the rape of Helen as the original cause of the events that are yet to happen and are not narrated. As in Homer, the closure of the narration goes back to its beginning, and does not clearly put the words 'the end' to the story, but is more like an implicit closure.[35] Once more, however, it is Callimachus who offers the closest model as he often ends his narratives with a reference back to their beginning, as in *h.* 4.273, *h.* 5.131–3, *h.* 6.116–7.[36]

Narratees are referred to as engaging with their narrator in Colluthus' poem: for instance, Hermes (secondary narratee) acts on his father's command

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32 Harder 2012, 52.

33 Harder 2004, 64, 67, 70.

34 Claud. *Rapt.* 1.20–31.

35 De Jong 2004, 18; Cuypers 2004, 45 n. 6.

36 Harder 2004, 78. Callimachus also frames the beginning and the end of the story with direct speech in the *Aetia*; see Harder 2012, 55.

(secondary narrator who has just spoken): πατρῴῃσιν ἐφημοσύνῃσι πιθήσας 79, and the Loves hear the bidding of their mother: μητρῴης ἐρατῆς ἀίοντες 100.

However, in some passages the narrative reveals shared expectations between secondary and primary narratees, who are therefore acknowledged and implicitly invited to participate: in 71, 280 and 282, a secondary narrator (first Zeus, then Paris) asks whether Hermes and then Helen have heard, respectively, of Paris, Troy and Dardanus. This technique is also used by Callimachus,[37] where similar passages worked to flatter the narratees' erudition and to invite them to cooperate. The narrator also involves his narratees by inserting rhetorical questions in the goddesses' speeches (Hera: τί γὰρ πολέμων βασιλῆι; 150; Aphrodite: τί γὰρ σακέων Ἀφροδίτῃ; 162). By doing so, the secondary narrator is questioning directly the secondary narratees (Zeus>Hermes 71, Paris> Helen 280 and 282, Hera>Paris 150, Aphrodite> Paris 162), but also indirectly his primary narratees, who also hear and seek to answer the question. Narratees can also be perceived in Homer through rhetorical questions as in *Il.* 17.260: "of the others, who could recall their names in their mind?" However, it is in Callimachus that narratees are expected to participate the most in the storytelling process; for instance, in *fr.* 178.1–34, a lengthy introduction to Theagenes narrated by Callimachus builds up curiosity in narratees and works as a revision of the stories.[38]

Let us now consider lines 300–304:

> οὐκ ἐρέω· τί δὲ τόσσον ἐπισταμένην σε διδάξω;
> οἶσθα γάρ, ὡς Μενέλαος ἀνάλκιδός ἐστι γενέθλης·
>
> I will not tell you: why should I tell you, who already know so well?
> For you know that Menelaus comes from a feeble race.

The passage above features Paris as a second internal narrator telling Helen, secondary narratee, that he does not need to tell her something that she already knows. This consideration can be expanded to the primary narrator, who is adapting the requirements of the second narrator and the second narratee's expectations to himself and the primary narratees: in fact, why do we—as the primary readers—need to be told about the whole story, since we know it already? Homer also adapted his narratees' requirements to his narrator and to those of other narratees: for instance, in *Od.* 4.535–60, where both a narratee in the past (Menelaus) and in the present (Telemachus) benefit from the secondary narrator's information (Proteus); the same story is also adapted

37 Call. *Aetia* 3–4, fr. 64.5–6.

38 Harder 2012, 53, and 2004, 69, 75.

for different narratees: the Oresteia is told to Telemachus with emphasis on Orestes as he is presented as a model for him (*Od.* 1.298–302 and 3.193–200), but when Odysseus is told about it, emphasis is placed on Agamemnon, whose destiny he should avoid (*Od.* 11.409–56).[39] Colluthus denies the need to narrate something that, in fact, has already been narrated and continues to be narrated; this technique is also found in Pindar *Nem.* 5.11–6, in which the poet creates an "oral subterfuge", i.e. a fictional mimesis of spontaneous speech (and oral improvised composition) to pretend that his narrative has just come to his mind by simple association arising from a detail that he has just mentioned.[40] Reticence is also employed by Apollonius, where Jason is unwilling to disclose anything about Ariadne, and also wonders why he should tell the story of Aethalides in *Arg.* 1.648–9, showing concern for his own evaluative skills regarding the narration's material (the full story may give too much information) and for his narratees' requirements.[41]

At 268, Helen (secondary narrator) asks Paris (secondary narratee) to tell her about his origins, but by saying εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν she actually joins him as a secondary narratee, and she further joins primary narratees, who want to find out about Paris as well; also in this case, then, requirements and expectations of secondary narratees are shared by secondary narrator and primary narratees. Callimachus uses the same technique in *fr.* 75, where he employs the first person plural twice (13–4 and 53–4) and he refers to Calliope as "ours" (76–7) to join narrator and narratees;[42] he also mixes apostrophes and secondary narratees in *h.* 5.51–7, where he addresses the men of Argos (narratees of the tale's warning), Athena, then the women attending the ritual, who are also narratees of a story in order to pass the time while waiting.[43]

The narrator responds to narratees' expectations by sometimes offering more information than is necessary, (considering that narratees' knowledge of the story is assumed): for instance, at 206 he clarifies that a πολυτλήτων σημήια … μόχθων appeared to Paris; he could have just said that they met with a storm. Also in 167–69 many words describe the apple received by Aphrodite as the primary cause of the war (ὁ δ' ἀγλαὸν … μῆλον, / ἀγλαΐης ἀνάθημα, μέγα κτέρας Ἀφρογενείῃ, / φυταλιὴν πολέμοιο, κακὴν πολέμοιο γενέθλην): the narrator is probably not concerned that narratees may overlook or miss the apple's

39 De Jong 2004, 23–4.

40 Pfeijffer 1999, 37.

41 Clare 2002, 280.

42 See also Call. *Aetia* fr. 75.48–9, where the narrator invites those who have experience of Eros to witness; see Harder 2004, 69, 74.

43 Harder 2004, 72–3.

profound and symbolic meaning, but he rather wishes to involve them in evaluating this.

The list of negatives used to name the guests at Peleus and Thetis' wedding (28–40) also deals with narratees' expectations and works as a review of who was there for the narratees, similarly to what happens in Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina* 2.147–150, where Diana does not despise the dances, and in Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 1.224–6, where the departure of Acastus and Argos is told by denying that they remained at home.[44] The "if not" technique[45] is also used at 269–77, where Helen tells Paris how he does not belong to the offspring known to her: this of course offers the narrator the opportunity to tell which heroes she knows. In some cases, the "if not" technique is also used to project a scenario of how things did not go: at 227–8, for instance, narratees are told that Paris' journey was almost over through the negation of the fact that the sail was long and the noise of oars was still heard. Equally, the list of Eris' plans of revenge (49–56) suggests a parallel story of how things did not go, therefore evoking and then contradicting narratees' expectations; in 342–7, the many scenarios offered to Hermione by the maids for Helen's disappearance also work in the same way; in 233–4, Paris makes sure that his hair is not tossed by the wind and his shoes are not soiled: ultimately, in all these cases narratees' cooperation is gained in confirming the actual version of events. Homer also used this technique[46] in *Od*. 5.436–7, where narratees are told that Odysseus would definitely have died, had Athena not come to his help.

The narrator makes primary narratees aware of secondary narratees through their involvement in an all-round scenario where the story is told through the sounds that are heard: the song of Peleus and Thetis' wedding was being sung (17–18);[47] the sound of oars was not heard for long (227–8); the cries of Phyllis (216) and Hermione's especially are heard loud and clear (329, 331, 335, 337, 338, etc.), and so is Paris' music (111–112, 115–116, 122–23, 125–6) and the silence created by it (117–121). All these sounds are heard (or not heard but imagined) by secondary narratees, who become like other characters for primary narratees by virtue of their perception.[48]

44 Cuypers 2004, 54–5.

45 For the technique in Triphiodorus see Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 28.

46 De Jong 2004, 16, 22.

47 An interesting parallel is Claud. *Rapt*. 2.230–31, where a wedding song being heard announces the wedding of Pluto and Proserpina.

48 In Catullus 64, narrative via ekphrasis is focalised through the internal viewer.

It is clear that a number of effects are achieved through the use of the above-mentioned narrative techniques in Colluthus' epyllion, and that they build a dynamic, dramatic and polyphonic text being told by multiple narrators in various ways. What was Colluthus' objective overall, then? In earlier tradition, auctorial interventions and other narrative techniques had been used to create various forms of illusion: Pindar does his best to make his elaborate, much rehearsed, commissioned and occasion-bound odes look as if they were improvised and composed on the spot, according to the canons of oral poetry.[49] To disguise his elaborate epic, Apollonius creates the illusion of a narrator talking directly to you, the reader; from his proem, modelled on Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*, he suggests that his epic should also be read as a hymn to Apollo, and therefore that the narrator is an epic singer performing in front of a live audience.[50] Callimachus' narrative, which is made up of stories of a written and erudite nature (unlike in Apollonius, where the sources acknowledged are only oral),[51] creates the fiction of an oral narrator performing in front of an audience.[52] In the *Abduction of Helen*, narrative techniques work closely with the poem's ekphrastic and visual impact to create a fiction of performance: Colluthus' poem is therefore written as, and reflects, a theatrical performance such as a pantomime.

As previously noted about the visual aspects of the *Abduction*, it is possible that Colluthus may have meant for his poem to be narrated as a performance or an artwork.[53] This interpretation would explain the presence of the

49 Pfeijffer 1999, 34–7.

50 Traditionally, epic recitation was preceded by the singing of Homeric hymns: see Cuypers 2004, 44.

51 Harder 2004, 79–80.

52 As in Apollonius' ironic paradox between his Homeric and Herodotean sources mentioned earlier, in Callimachus occasionally the narrator creates a tension between the reality of written communication and the fiction of oral communication: for instance in *Aetia* 1–2 old Callimachus is really writing about the fictional and oral dialogue between the Muses and young Callimachus; see Harder 2012, 52, and 2004, 79.

53 Longus, in the programmatic start of his novel (1.2), admits: ἰδόντα με καὶ θαυμάσαντα πόθος ἔσχεν ἀντιγράψαι τῇ γραφῇ, "As I gazed in admiration, a desire to depict the picture in words seized me". The whole novel is in fact presented as being inspired by a picture that he himself has found: εἰκόνα γραπτήν, ἱστορίαν ἔρωτος, "a painting that told as story of love" (Trans. C. Gill); the story becomes thus twice as emotionally effective: not only did it originate from a beautiful work of art, but also that painting was found personally by the author (see Reirdon 1989, 289 n. 1), who was so touched that he was compelled to describe it through words. Ekphrasis is common in Greek novels, and it becomes more common in Byzantine works: Eustathius Macrembolites, a novelist from the second half of the twelfth century AD, includes large ekphrasis of paintings in books 2 and 4 of the

visual effects in the poem, and would offer insights into Colluthus' audience and occasion. The poet may be using his text to achieve a mismatched effect (stage-facing reactions), expecting his readers to make the effort of exploring the places between narrative and dramatic performance. We would be dealing with a two-level text, in which the author uses dramatic artifices in a text to mime a performance in order to provoke in his readers reactions similar to the ones experienced by a public of theatre-goers, not readers.

Another aspect links Colluthus to performance: he also wrote panegyrics,[54] which were recited in public, normally in the presence of the emperor, as happened for those of Procopius of Gaza[55] and Priscian of Caesarea for Anastasius. This genre usually borrowed extensively from rhetoric, employing graphic and dramatic effects for enhanced reaction. During the last stage of education, the most challenging exercise that students faced was ethopoiia, a speech impersonating a famous mythological character; rhetoric and theatricality worked together towards the aim of sounding sensational and shaking the audience.[56] Colluthus, like his predecessors but perhaps also his contemporary poets, consciously or unconsciously wrote his epyllion in a similar way, employing narrative devices to create the illusion of a public performance: the result is a text that shares aspects of rhetorical and theatrical nature.[57]

## 2 Auctorial Addresses

In some cases the preferred narrative techniques used in the epyllion offer the narrator the opportunity to make himself seen by his narratees, and their evaluative nature contributes to enhance the drama of the single episodes. If we

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*Story of Hysmine and Hysminias*; Theodore Prodromos, his contemporary, also included a lengthy ekphrasis of a gemstone cup in his *Rhodanthe and Dosicles*, 4.331–411, modelled on Theocr. *Id.* 1 and Ach. Tat. 2.3.

54 In this logic, his other works are compatible with the epyllion, proving a literary consistency.

55 His panegyric was recited in public on the occasion of a statue of the emperor being sent to Gaza, similarly to Paul the Silentiary, whose *Ekphrasis on Hagia Sophia* (including a panegyric of both Justinian and the patriarch Eutychius) was recited inside the building in 563, see Whitby 1985.

56 Rhetorical exercises influenced many other genres: see for instance Peirano 2012, where their role on the Latin pseudepigrapha of the early empire is argued.

57 On the influence and close relation between progymnasmata and poetry see Webb 1997 and 2001.

take the *Abduction* at its face value—a short epic poem—why does the poet feel the urge to share his views with the readers?

Auctorial interventions, especially those in which the poet speaks in the first person, achieve the immediate effect of breaking the fiction. This type of direct address had been employed in epic tradition since Homer, and continued to be popular in Apollonius, Callimachus and Nonnus, but was also used in other genres, such as Pindar's choral poetry and epigram. The focus here is on the literary purposes of Colluthus' addresses as narrative techniques, in light of earlier tradition and especially contemporary writers of the late fifth or the early sixth century AD.

It should also be specified that the standard definition of "address" as a narrative technique identifies an address to the reader,[58] such as Mus. *Her*. 23–7: σὺ δ', εἴ ποτε κεῖθι περήσεις, / δίζεό μοί τινα πύργον, ὅπῃ ποτὲ Σηστιὰς Ἡρὼ / ἵστατο λύχνον ἔχουσα καὶ ἡγεμόνευε Λεάνδρῳ· / δίζεο δ' ἀρχαίης ἁλιηχέα πορθμὸν Ἀβύδου / εἰσέτι που κλαίοντα μόρον καὶ ἔρωτα Λεάνδρου, "if you one day will pass on those places, I beg you: look for a tower, where once Hero of Sestos stood, who, holding a light, was guide to Leander, and look for the loud undertow straits of ancient Abydos, that perhaps still cries over Leander's destiny and love". The narrator does not address his reader: the instances in which the author addresses other characters will be explored here and defined as auctorial addresses.

The narrator makes himself seen on three occasions in the epyllion: in the proem, where he addresses the Nymphs (Νύμφαι Τρωιάδες 1) and asks them to come over (δεῦτε 5) and tell him (εἴπατέ μοι 6) the origin of the story; at 251–52, where he addresses Dionysus; and in 216, where he addresses Phyllis. Focus will be placed on the last two instances, since the poet's address to the Nymphs fits in with the standard features of proems, i.e. a subgenre of its own, which does not convey any additional meanings other than those already discussed in the section about Colluthus' proem.

### 2.1 *Address to Dionysus*

Colluthus breaks the fiction by directly addressing a god,[59] Dionysus, with an impertinent statement. At 252 he says: ἱλήκοις, Διόνυσε· καὶ εἰ Διός ἐσσι γενέθλης,

58 Herman, Jahn, Ryan 2005, 4–5.

59 Callimachus also addresses gods, for instance Hera in *h*. 4.106–7 and 215–6, Artemis in *h*. 3.72–90, Apollo in *h*. 2.69, 72, 80, and Zeus in *h*. 1.6, 7, 43, 46; see Harder 2012, 53, and 2004, 74. Claudian also makes Ceres address Latona in *Rapt*. 3.306, and the goddesses at 295 and 311.

/ καλὸς ἔην καὶ κεῖνος ἐπ' ἀγλαΐῃσι προσώπων, "forgive me, Dionysus! Even if you are the son of Zeus, he too was beautiful, for the grace of his face".[60]

When Paris has just arrived at Menelaus' house, and just before Helen opens the door to him, the narrator feels the urge to praise Paris' beauty, so much so that he apologises to Dionysus for saying that Paris' beauty was superior to that of the god's. By voicing his opinion, the narrator demands a role for himself; moreover, by interacting with Dionysus, Colluthus adds two more characters to the scene: himself and the god. It is as if the meeting of Paris and Helen were paused for a moment to allow for contemplation of the shepherd's beauty, a contemplation that is enhanced in such a way that Dionysus must be called upon and apologised to in an almost official way. As we have seen earlier, Paris' makeover had put him in the same aesthetic league as Aphrodite and Hera, as he ἵστατο θεσπεσίῃσιν ἀγαλλόμενος χαρίτεσσιν in 250: his beauty is described as "divine graces" just before he is compared to Dionysus; Colluthus' compliment does not come as a surprise.

With this artifice, the poet is forcing his readers to admire Paris in all his grace (in case they had neglected to appreciate his beauty earlier, when he was bathing in 231–5), and thus to pay tribute to his magnificence. Not only that: he is also making us, the readers, see Paris through his eyes, in a way that we would not otherwise have seen him. Would have we realised, even after witnessing his beautifying ablutions from which he re-emerges as a new man, that he was actually superior to Dionysus in beauty? Probably not. Now that we are made to see him through the appreciative eyes of the poet, do we actually believe that Paris is better looking than a god? Probably not. The narrator, who in this case also functions as the focaliser[61] that allows us to see Paris through his eyes, appears to care very much about the matter.

Colluthus is evaluating Paris' beauty as an internal narrator, and this by default makes him a less reliable narrator than he would be if he had left this judgement to the readers alone.[62] His evaluation is quite personal and shows a high level of involvement, as he feels the need to apologise to a god for Paris' beauty; and yet, Paris is only a remote mythological character, unrelated to the narrator (i.e. Colluthus is the author, not another character within the story in which Paris appears). Then, how can Colluthus' position be justified? The poet is obviously taking sides and seeking to drive the readers' opinion to "bend a gentle eye" (see Colluthus 132) for Paris; he may be preparing us to be well

60 In Apollonius, Jason had been compared to Sirius, beautiful to look at but a bearer of anguish for Medea (*Arg*. 3.956–61). Paris is likewise a carrier of ill fate.

61 Porter Abbott 2008, 67–99; Bal 1997, 142–61.

62 Porter Abbott, 74–7.

disposed towards Helen, when she reacts to his beauty with an immediate and irresistible infatuation.

The formula chosen by Colluthus for the apology is also found in Apollonius, who closes his epic by pleading with the Argonauts to be favourable to his singing (ἵλατ' *Arg.* 4.1773–81), apologises to the Muses (ἵλατε 4.982–6) when he has to tell an unflattering story about the gods and, more interestingly, apologises to Apollo in 2.708–10 for referring to his hair, which, of course, is intact (ἱλήκοις).[63] We find ἱλήκοις very often in epigrams: Ruf. *AP* 5.73.3 and in Colluthus' contemporaries Paul the Silentiary (*Ekphr. Soph.* 179) and Agathias (*AP* 5.299.9 and 9.154.1): interestingly, the only other passage in which the exact formula used by Colluthus (ἱλήκοις, Διόνυσε) appears is Agathias' *AP* 6.74.5, which may suggest an imitation by Agathias.[64] Nonnus borrows the formula extensively from Apollonius in the *Dionysiaca*[65] to mitigate what the poet is about to say,[66] and Colluthus may have had in mind two Nonnian instances in particular, in which beauty is at stake: the closest reference could be 10.314–317, where Dionysus apologises to Zeus[67] for saying that his beloved Ampelus is better looking than his father's lover Ganymede:

> Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἱλήκοις, τανυσίπτερε· μή μοι ἐνίψῃς
> Τρώιον οἰνοχοῆα τεῶν δρηστῆρα κυπέλλων,
> ὅττι φαεινοτέροιο φέρων ἀμάρυγμα προσώπου
> Ἄμπελος ἱμερόεις Γανυμήδεος εἶδος ἐλέγχει·

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63 Cuypers 2004, 48–9.

64 Not the other way around, since Agathias was born around 536, 18 years after Anastasius' death (which is the only reference we have for Colluthus' life).

65 Livrea 1968a, 196. Other occurrences include 46, 297, where Agave apologises to Dionysus because he destroyed the whole offspring of Cadmus (ἵλήκοι Διόνυσος); in 4.50 Harmonia apologises to Hermes; in 8.73 Semele to the Olympus; 16.325, where Pan apologises to his pasture; in 25.211 the poet apologises to Iolaus because he killed the Hydra but only Heracles took the credit; in 29.115 Dionysus apologises to Aristaeus, as he would not suffer so much for his death as he is suffering for that of Hymenaeus, and in 135 to Aphrodite; in 30.287 Athena apologises to Zeus' glory while seeking to instil courage in Dionysus. Also see Theocr. 15.143.

66 Accorinti 2004, 480.

67 The formula Ζεῦ πάτερ has a long tradition in epic: *Il.* 1.503, 3.276, 320, 365, 5.421, *Od.* 5.7, 7.331; Call. *h.* 1.43; Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 4.1673; Quint. Sm. 3.499, 4.49, 8.431; Nonn. *Dion.*11.315, 32.48. It also enjoyed much popularity in other genres: Theogn. 1.731; Soph. *Oed. Tyr.* 202; Opp. *Hal.* 1.409; Opp. *Cyn.* 3.237; Pind. *Ol.* 7.87, *Nem.* 8.35; Archil. *Fr.* 177.1; Alc. fr. 691 LP, and in late antique and byzantine literature: Procl. *In Plat.* 3.185.5; Theod. Prodr. *Rhod.* 2.468; Eusth. *Hysm.* 6.10.4.

> Zeus father, wide-winged god, forgive me: do not speak to me of your Trojan wine pourer, the servant of your cups, since Ampelus spurs desire and defeats the beauty of Ganymede with the brilliance of his face, which is more radiant!

Here, as in Colluthus' passage, the face is the criterion of beauty that determines superiority. In the other Nonnian passage, interestingly, breasts are the key, as Aura promotes a beauty ideal which is deprived of any femininity (*Dion.* 48.351–4 and 361–9): at 361 Aura apologises to Artemis, when she mocks her breasts while swimming: ἱλήκοι τεὸν εἶδος· ἐγὼ σέο μᾶλλον ἀρείων, "may your beauty pardon me, but I am much better than you".[68]

It has already been mentioned that beauty is all about the face in Colluthus[69] (see lines 30 διακρίνων προφερέστερον εἶδος ὀπωπῆς, 75 κέκλεο καὶ βλεφάρων ξυνοχὴν καὶ κύκλα προσώπων, and 87 σήμερον ἀγλαΐαι με διακρίνουσι προσώπων, in addition to the already discussed attention to heads and hair), although paradoxically Paris' choice is ultimately related to breasts. In complimenting Paris' beauty, Colluthus once again reiterates his stance on facial beauty, and does so employing ἀγλαίη, the same quality on which Aphrodite was tested (87), and that is the reason behind women's superiority (163 ἀγλαΐῃ πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀριστεύουσι γυναῖκες) against ἠνορέη, the valour promised to Paris by Athena and mocked by both Hera (152) and Aphrodite (164).

Another interesting aspect is the choice of the myth included in the Nonnian passage of reference: Dionysus, the lover of Ampelus, and Ganymede, the lover of Zeus (together with Hyacinth, who is also recalled by Colluthus in 241–8) share the destiny of beautiful young boys kidnapped by divinities, and now Colluthus puts Paris in this league too. If in the *Dionysiaca* Dionysus was apologising to Zeus, in the *Abduction* the poet is apologising to Dionysus, acting as the god did in the Nonnian passage.

Along with the meeting of Paris and Helen, the invocation to the Nymphs at the incipit of the poem is one of the two most crucial points of the epyllion; it is at these two particular points that the poet can count on the highest level of attention of his readers. It is therefore not accidental that Colluthus calls upon the immortals precisely in these two circumstances: on the one hand, he is granting a connection with the gods; on the other hand, he wants to take advantage of the momentum by breaking the fiction and revealing himself as the craftsman. In the proem, as seen in Chapter 2, the poet also makes a precise statement about his poetics by means of the sea metaphor and the water-

68 Hadjittofi 2008, 124.

69 Paschalis 2008, 144.

related terminology: this element, associated with the narrative techniques that break the fiction, reveals Colluthus' awareness as a poet and his clear intention to be recognised. By presenting himself in both cases as interacting with the immortals, he is ensuring that his memory is aligned to that of the Nymphs and Dionysus: he can interrogate them and challenge them, although he makes sure not to go beyond the limits of human nature when he apologises to the god for complimenting Paris' beauty.

Musaeus, whose *Hero and Leander* tells another story of seduction, interestingly employs similar narrative techniques when it comes to describe Hero's beauty: firstly, he addresses the reader[70] by inviting him to agree on the association of ideas that Hero's body evokes: ἦ τάχα φαίης / Ἡροῦς ἐν μελέεσσι ῥόδων λειμῶνα φανῆναι 59–60, "surely you would have said that Hero's body was like a meadow of roses". Here, the direct φαίης is a narrative address as defined above, from the narrator to the reader, and, like Colluthus', it implies a high level of involvement on the narrator's part as it seeks agreement from the readers: the readership that emerges from this interaction appears educated and refined. Musaeus also appears as an unreliable narrator then, as his opinion of Hero's beauty as something sublime is enhanced by his simile of the meadow of roses: he is not only presenting his opinion but also projecting his idea of it as something half-surreal onto readers' imagination; this is similar to Colluthus, who projects Paris' beauty onto the level of divine beauty. Moreover, his invitation to approve of his image reveals his desire to seek his readers' involvement too.

Another interesting parallel with Musaeus is that Hero's beauty is described by one of her suitors as unlike any of the beauties that he has seen in Sparta: καὶ Σπάρτης ἐπέβην, Λακεδαίμονος ἔδρακον ἄστυ, / ἧχι μόθον καὶ ἄεθλον ἀκούομεν ἀγλαϊάων· / τοίην δ' οὔ ποτ' ὄπωπα νέην ἰδανήν θ' ἁπαλήν τε 74–6, "I reached even the land of Sparta, and I saw the city of Lacedaemon where we know beautiful girls compete; yet I have never seen such a graceful and beautiful young woman". It is curious that the young man refers to Sparta here, Helen's hometown. In Colluthus, she had said something similar to Paris twice, when she struggled to identify him: ἀλλὰ τεὴν οὐκ οἶδα παρ' Ἀργείοισι γενέθλην (270), and τεὴν δ' οὐκ εἶδον ὀπωπὴν (273), thus our poet could be entertaining an allusive game with Musaeus' passage on more than one level.

70 Claudian also addresses his readers on a number of occasions: *Rapt.* 1.257, 2.29 and 124, 3.374 (*credas*, "you would believe ...").

Finally, it is worth noting that Christodorus, in his ekphrasis, also addresses many of his characters (i.e. the statues he describes) by name.[71] His invitation to engage in a conversation with him works as a rhetorical device to break the monotony of the ekphrastic catalogue, and aims to achieve an illusionistic identification between art and reality.

### 2.2 *Phyllis*

While describing Paris' journey, Colluthus suddenly addresses Phyllis in the second person singular (214–18):

> Φυλλίδος ἀντέλλοντα φιλήνορος ἔδρακε τύμβον
> καὶ δρόμον ἐννεάκυκλον ἀλήμονος εἶδε κελεύθου,
> ἔνθα διαστείχουσα κινύρεο, Φυλλίς, ἀκοίτην
> δεχνυμένη παλίνορσον ἀπήμονα Δημοφόωντα,
> ὁππότε νοστήσειεν Ἀθηναίης ἀπὸ δήμων.
>
> [Paris] saw the nine-circled course of the wandering path, where you, Phyllis, went through bewailing, while waiting for your husband Demophon to return safe and sound, when should he come back from the land of Athena.

Phyllis is a character who does not play a role within the story,[72] but Colluthus makes Paris see her grave, a landmark that awakens memories of her sad wanderings, and exploits this as an occasion to paint a sorrowful digression. By addressing her directly he reveals himself as the poet, once again bringing two more characters on the scene: himself and Phyllis. The fiction is thus broken for a few lines, and readers are brought back to the "reality" of a poet constructing an imaginary environment.

This brief and sorrowful episode reminds us of a similar address in Triph. 660–3,[73] where Laodice, like Phyllis, is addressed directly by the poet as he recalls her sad destiny at Troy:

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71 Christ. *AP* 2.398, 117, 131, 143–4, 175–6, 197, 256 (Tissoni 2000a).

72 Unlike Helen, addressed by Paris and Hermione in the cases discussed below.

73 In Triph. 403–5, the poet addresses directly Polyxena to tell her he shall cry only a little for her. The same formula is used in both passages (δῖα Πολυξείνη, σὲ δὲ πατρίδος ἐγγύθι γαίης / κεκλιμένην ὀλίγον δακρύσομαι· ὡς ὄφελέν τις / Ἀργείων ἐπὶ σοῖσι γόοις ὀλέσαι με καὶ αὐτήν, "Fair Polyxena, I shall cry—but only a little—for you as you lie near your fatherland: if only some of the Argives had killed me too, together with your sorrowful destiny!".

δειλὴ Λαοδίκη, σὲ δὲ πατρίδος ἐγγύθι γαίης
γαῖα περιπτύξασα κεχηνότι δέξατο κόλπῳ·
οὐδέ σε Θησείδης Ἀκάμας οὐδ' ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν
ἤγαγε ληιδίην, ἔθανες δ' ἅμα πατρίδι γαίῃ.

Poor Laodice! You, whom the enfolding earth took in her gaping bosom, near your native land; and neither Acamas, the son of Theseus, nor any other among the Achaeans led you as a prisoner: you died with your fatherland.

There are various versions of the myth of Laodice, the daughter of Priam and Hecuba:[74] the main version sees her being swallowed by the opening earth while Troy is burning; however, the story told by Triphiodorus refers to her secret affair with Acamas, the son of Theseus, which led to the birth of a son named Munitus. This son may be the link followed by Colluthus in choosing to speak of Phyllis, as in another version of the myth Laodice has a secret affair with Demophon (Phyllis' husband mentioned in Colluthus, and Acamas' brother), leading to the birth of a son named Munychus.[75]

The lexical insistence on Phyllis' wandering and waiting (δρόμον ἐννεάκυκλον ἀλήμονος ... κελεύθου ... κινύρεο ... δεχνυμένη παλίνορσον ... ὁππότε νοστήσειεν) paints a circular picture that is all of a sudden brought to life, although just for a moment. Phyllis' wandering also comes to mind at the end of the epyllion, when Hermione wanders, in reality (388) and in dreams (371, 376), through the paths where Helen perhaps got lost while wandering or, more precisely, wandering once again (343, 354).

Kutzko[76] highlighted how these interruptions of the fiction[77] occur in Theocritus, Herodas and Virgil at key transitional points, often when a new scene is about to be introduced, so that they serve the purpose of jarring the audience and prepare it for a change of action. The question of whether these works may have been brought to stage has been explored at length, but Kutzko focusses on the textual elements that break the fiction, exposing the artifice of literature. These elements interrupt the poetic artifice for a moment, although the characters all remain in role, and make the audience unequivocally aware of the fiction and of the poet, albeit not long enough to shatter the creative

74 Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 460–61.

75 This version of the story is told by Plut. *Thes.* 34.2.

76 Kutzko 2007–2008, 151–3.

77 "Indirect audience addresses" are defined as indirect since the fiction is not interrupted by the poet himself, but in some other indirect way: in these cases, the characters.

spell and the fictional escape in which they have embarked. In these three works, the audience is addressed by a character who comments on an external element which exposes the artifice (the metre in Herodas' 1, the Dorian dialect in Theocritus' *Id.* 15, Pollio in Virg. *Ecl.* 3). By momentarily stepping out of the story, the characters acknowledge both the audience, and the poet and his art.

In Herodas 1 the technique is used to prepare the audience for an unsettling end of the mime: when, where, how and if the two women settle their argument remains unclear. In Theocritus 15, on the other hand, the effect of his dialect-related interruption achieves a very different effect: the discussion about Doric in fact brings the idyll together, achieving a sense of unity. Herodas instead does not achieve this effect: at the end of the mime, we are left with a feeling of dissonance, or lack of clarity about the outcome of the discussion. Kutkzo explains this with the different aesthetic goals and concerns of the two poets.[78] In Homer, addresses in the second person to another character are used more often by a secondary narrator who tells a secondary narratee about a common experience, as in *Il.* 15.18–33, where Zeus reminds Hera of how he hung her from the sky; here, fiction is broken to tell the embedded narrative that then works as a reference for narratees who can relate the rest of the story to that episode.[79] In Apollonius, apostrophes of single characters are rare,[80] but the Argonauts are addressed directly by the narrator both in 4.1383 and in the already mentioned epilogue. Callimachus uses the apostrophe frequently:[81] for instance, he addresses Acontius many times in *Aet.* 3. (e.g. fr. 75.40, 44–8, 51, 53): here, the narrator's interventions cut the distance from the narrated story, but the narrative never becomes sentimental as he continuously intertwines it with erudite material.[82]

However, once again Colluthus' closest model seems to be Claudian, who addresses Hyacinth in a brief digression in *Rapt.* 2.131–6:

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78 Kutzko 2007, 143–6. In Theocritus' *Idyll* 15, a man interrupts Praxinoa and Gorgo's chat by commenting on their dialect (Dorian), and she replies to his comments (78–93): suddenly the fiction is interrupted. In Herodas' *Mimiamb* 1, Gyllis invites Metriche to cheat on her husband, and Metriche indignant responds that she would not have tolerated such comments from another woman, also alluding to the choliambs, the meter of Hipponax (69–72). Both passages have programmatic goals linked to literary instruments, while Virgil's *Ecl.* 3.84–5 includes a reference not to a narrative technique, but to a contemporary of the poet, Pollio, who also loved pastoral poetry.

79 De Jong 2004, 6.

80 One example is Pollux, who is also addressed directly by Lycus in *Arg.* 2.798; see Cuypers 2004, 48.

81 Call. *h.* 5.1–4, 13–7, 27–32, 134–8; *h.* 6.1–2, 118–9); see Harder 2012, 53, and 2004, 72, 74.

82 D'Alessio 1996, 485.

> Te quoque flebilibus maerens, Hyacinthe, figuris
> Narcissumque metunt, nunc inclita germina veris,
> praestantes olim pueros. Tu natus Amyclis,
> hunc Helicon genuit. Disci te perculit error,
> hunc fontis decepit amor. Te fronte recussa
> Delius, hunc fracta Cephisus harundine luget

> You also they harvested, Hyacinth, mourning with your letters of lamentation, and Narcissus—now famous buds of spring, but once pre-eminent boys: you, Hyacinth, were born at Amyclae, Narcissus Helicon begot; you the swerve of the discus struck, him love of the spring deceived; for you mourned the god of Delos with battered forehead, for him Cephisus with broken reeds.

Colluthus, at 240–8, also introduces a digression about Hyacinth, narrated in the third person. The story of Hyacinth is also a favourite in late-antique epic,[83] particularly in Nonnus: it appears in *Dion.* 2.80–4, 11.253–61 and 12.154–60.[84] With the digression of Phyllis, which is narrated partly in the third and partly in the second person as a direct address to the character, it is possible that Colluthus meant to play with his model by mixing content and form of narration. Colluthus alludes to, and varies, his model by applying the address to another character but still pays homage to him by exploiting the same anecdote.

What does Colluthus achieve with his address to Phyllis? At this point in the story, readers have already gone through about 20 lines of Paris and his travelling: an unexpected break comes just at the right time to awaken the audience before continuing for about another 20 lines of the journey. The address to Phyllis is placed roughly halfway between the first and the second part of Paris' journey: in the second half, the 30 lines (218–48) are also interrupted by Paris' ablutions (231–5) and the Hyacinth digression (240–8).

What about the content of this digression?[85] As in his previous references to other myths, Colluthus once again chooses a sad story, that of a love affair that ends in death. The story of Hyacinth shares the same tearful ending, and is equally powerful as an omen to the unsuccessful ending to Paris and Helen's

83 Opp. *Cyn.* 1.362.

84 See n. 149 p. 26.

85 The story of Phyllis was included by Lucian in *Salt.* 40.9 as a popular subject for pantomimes.

love affair.[86] Phyllis' loyalty to her husband is strategically placed ahead and plays with Helen's future and opposite behaviour towards the two men in her life: her lack of loyalty towards Menelaus[87] contrast with Phyllis' fidelity, but during the war she will be loyal to Paris, like Phyllis to Demophon. Moreover, the closest connection to the story could be that Phyllis killed herself, like Oenone, Paris' wife, whose existence is only barely referred to in 165, and whom the poet seems to want to erase from the story,[88] together with the other "inconvenient" partner, Menelaus.[89]

It has been noted that Phyllis' death, in all versions of the myth, happens after the Trojan War,[90] but Colluthus is unconcerned with chronological sequence and precision: as with the other previously mentioned, supposed inaccuracies (the type of animals tended by Paris, for instance), this too can be explained by the poet's intention to paint a picture that was intended to be dramatic, not precise.

By personally addressing the protagonist of such a dramatic myth, Colluthus reveals his own reaction to the myth; as if moved by the tale of Phyllis' aimless wanderings, he jumps in as though to bring her back to life, as if she were a contemporary and he could feel her pain. The narrator's sympathy and compassion towards the characters is similar to that shown to Patroclus in *Il.* 16.692–3, where Homer addresses the hero compassionately.[91] This technique does not fail to add theatricality to the story, and the switching of subject forces the readers to look at her, as if she were suddenly on a stage beside Paris and Helen, and the poet were pointing right at her. Readers are now sympathising with Phyllis, who has endured much suffering, but as soon as they turn their eye they will see Paris and Helen, who in contrast are responsible for the suffering of others. The contrast suggested by the two different emotional outcomes leads readers to look at the couple with even less sympathy, perhaps with an evaluating eye.

Musaeus addresses Leander, the main character of his epyllion, on two occasions: first at 86–89:

86 Paschalis 2008, 140.

87 Magnelli 2008, 160.

88 In Christodorus' ekphrasis 215–217, Oenone (her statue) is described as jealously spying on Paris with an insane look (see Tissoni 2000a, 176): surprisingly, Colluthus decides to pass on this opportunity to construct a picturesque detail.

89 Prauscello 2008, 176 and Paschalis 2008, 145.

90 Rocca 1997, 175.

91 De Jong 2004, 16.

> Αἰνοπαθὲς Λείανδρε, σὺ δ', ὡς ἴδες εὐκλέα κούρην,
> οὐκ ἔθελες κρυφίοισι κατατρύχειν φρένα κέντροις,
> ἀλλὰ πυριβλήτοισι δαμεὶς ἀδόκητον ὀιστοῖς
> οὐκ ἔθελες ζώειν περικαλλέος ἄμμορος Ἡροῦς
>
> Oh Leander, you prey to an unhappy passion: at the sight of the noble maiden you could not stand for your heart to suffer in secret pains, and at once, overwhelmed by the fire-burning darts, you no longer wanted to live without the beautiful Hero.

Then at 300–304:

> ἀλλ' οὐ χειμερίης σε φόβος κατέρυκε θαλάσσης,
> κατερόθυμε Λέανδρε. διακτορίη δέ σε πύργου
> ἠθάδα σημαίνουσα φαεσφορίην ὑμεναίων
> μαινομένης ὤτρυνεν ἀφειδήσαντα θαλάσσης νηλειὴς καὶ ἄπιστος
>
> But the fear of the stormy sea did not stop you, brave-hearted Leander; the message of the tower, the familiar light, preannouncement of hymenaea pushed you, and you did not care for the fury of the sea, cruel deceitful message.

Both moments are equally crucial for the development of the plot, and Musaeus empathises with his character's inability to restrain himself, first from falling in love with Hero, and then from swimming across the stormy sea.

Musaeus' address to Leander reveals once again his involvement with the story but also with Leander's passion and courage. Another interesting aspect is that Musaeus highlights that Leander ignored the omen to his fate, the stormy sea; it has been highlighted earlier that Paris, in Colluthus, is oblivious to the many omens that appear to him. However, Paris also crosses a stormy sea, a waterspout to be precise: he rows through it with his crew, once again oblivious to the foreshadowing of his sad destiny. In Musaeus, Leander recognises the omen but decides not to pay attention to it: the narrator also justifies his behaviour as Leander is pushed by eros; in Colluthus, on the other hand, Paris does not recognise the omen (the poet does), is totally unaware of it, and is not even said by the poet to be compelled by any particular force such as eros (he is moved by greed, or perhaps by his ambition to grow socially through an advantageous marriage, but Colluthus is not prepared to state this explicitly).

## 3 Characters' Addresses

On two occasions Colluthus makes his characters speak by switching from a narrative form (in the third person) to a direct address (in the second person). Hermione, speaking to her maids, suddenly calls upon her mother, while Paris, standing in front of Helen, speaks about her as if she were absent. In both instances the psychological condition of the speaking character is emphasised and clarified to the reader, their emotions made readable through a sequence of phrases with different subjects.

### 3.1 *Hermione*

Hermione is speaking to her maids when suddenly she switches to the second person singular, addressing her absent mother (349–64):

> οἶδεν ὄρος, ποταμῶν ἐδάη ῥόον, οἶδε κελεύθους
> ἐς ῥόδον, ἐς λειμῶνα· τί μοι φθέγγεσθε, γυναῖκες;
> ἀστέρες ὑπνώουσι, καὶ ἐν σκοπέλοισιν ἰαύει·
> ἀστέρες ἀντέλλουσι, καὶ οὐ παλίνορσος ἱκάνει.
> **μῆτερ ἐμή, τίνα χῶρον ἔχεις; τίνα δ' οὔρεα ναίεις;**
> **πλαζομένην θῆρές σε κατέκτανον;** ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτοὶ
> θῆρες ἀριζήλοιο Διὸς τρομέουσι γενέθλην.
> **ἤριπες ἐξ ὀχέων χθαμαλῆς ἐπὶ νῶτα κονίης**
> **σὸν δέμας οἰοπόλοισιν ἐνὶ δρυμοῖσι λιποῦσα;**
> ἀλλὰ πολυπρέμνων ξυλόχων ὑπὸ δάσκιον ὕλην
> δένδρεα παπτήνασα καὶ αὐτῶν μέχρι πετήλων
> **σὸν δέμας οὐκ ἐνόησα·** καὶ οὐ νεμεσίζομαι ὕλῃ.
> **μὴ διεροῖς στονόεντος ἐπ' Εὐρώταο ῥεέθροις**
> **νηχομένην ἐκάλυψεν ὑποβρυχίην σε γαλήνη;**
> ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ποταμοῖσι καὶ ἐν πελάγεσσι θαλάσσης
> Νηιάδες ζώουσι καὶ οὐ κτείνουσι γυναῖκας.

> She knows the hill, she knows the flow of the river, and she knows the paths that bring to the roses, to the meadow. What are you saying to me, women? The stars are asleep, and she spends the night among the rocks; the stars arise, and yet she does not come back home. **Mother of mine, where are you? On which hills have you stopped? Had you lost your way, and have the wild beasts slain you?** But even wild beasts fear the offspring of much respected Zeus! **Have you fallen from your chariot on the back of the dusty ground, abandoning your body in the lonely woods?** But I did look around searching the trees of the copses full of

> trunks, even down to their every leaf, and **yet I could not see your body**. And I do not blame the wood. **Have the still waters covered you in the depths while you swam in the liquid streams of the rippling Eurotas?** But even in the rivers and in the open sea the Naiads live, and they do not kill women!

Hermione begins her speech (349) by telling the maids, in the third person, about Helen who does know the hills and the paths to the roses, but then switches suddenly to the second person plural, addressing the maids directly (350). Colluthus then dramatically, within two lines (351–2), contrasts the stars, which sleep and rise in the third person plural, and Helen, who sleeps among the rocks and does not come home, in the third person singular (351–2). At 353 Hermione addresses Helen directly in the second person singular and asks her about her whereabouts (353), then switches to the third person plural, wondering whether wild beasts have killed her (354–5), and then back again to the second person singular in 356. At 360 Hermione switches to the first person singular. Finally, the last changes of subject refer first to the water that may have covered Helen, in the third person singular (362) and then plural, referred to the Naiads (364). In total, there are 12 subjects in the space of 16 lines. The full series of subjects is: Helen/you maids/the stars/Helen/the stars/Helen/you Helen/the beasts/you Helen/I/the still water/the Naiads. Similarly, in *Her*. 7, Ovid makes Dido switch three times from the second to the third person.[92]

The overall impression achieved by this rapid and continuous subject change is one of emotional disorder:[93] although in the words of the maids (338–47) there are five subjects in the space of seven lines (you Hermione/Helen/you Hermione/your eyes and your cheeks/Helen), the effect of lines 349–64 is much more dramatic and makes Hermione's desperation almost tangible. As her speech develops into a monologue and an intimate conversation with her absent mother, the interaction sought by Hermione with the third parties in this Helen-gone-missing case becomes a continuous source of anguish for the reader, too. Her behaviour is that of anyone who is searching for something and cannot find it: first she questions the trustworthiness of her maids' version (that her mother has gone to a girls' meeting or for a bath, and

92 Ov. *Her*. 7.25, 103 and last 6 lines of the epistula.

93 Speaking of Ovid's *Heroides*, Cunningham 1949, 103 noticed the theatrical potential of similar passages: "A passage of this sort provides an opportunity for presenting a remarkable sequence of various emotional states, and this presentation might suitably be accompanied by considerable physical activity on the part of an actor".

she will come back); then she asks her mother directly where she is; she interrogates third parties (the wild beasts—perhaps they have killed her mother, but this is not really a possibility, as beasts would have been frightened of the daughter of Zeus). Hermione addresses her mother directly once again, desperately seeking to fit her in one of the various possible scenarios she imagines. Finally, she returns to search again in the same places that have already been searched,[94] hoping to see something that has been overlooked, and she questions herself: she has searched among the trees, even down to each single leaf, and she has not seen her mother. The same doubt about overlooking something reappears in 376 when she wonders which mountain she has forgotten to search. The last possibility that Hermione explores is that Helen has drowned in the river Eurotas, but this scenario also proves unlikely, as river Nymphs do not kill women.

Hermione's desperate search for Helen echoes Autonoe and Aristaeus' tear-jerking search for the body of their son Actaeon in Nonn. *Dion.* 5.270–409, where the metamorphosis undergone by the boy offers new cues to Nonnus to fully dramatically exploit the tragedy of Autonoe's inability to identify her son's remains (especially 390–404, where the bones of Actaeon, now transformed into a deer, are not recognised by his parents).[95] Here, too, the narrator intervenes to express his sympathy to the unfortunate mother, who is not blamed for not recognising her son (395 and 401).

There are also a number of similarities between Colluthus' dialogue of Hermione and her maids, and Claudian's speech of Pluto to his bride in the *Abduction of Proserpina*: both include an exhortation to stop crying (338 τέκνον ὀδυρομένη, γόον εὔνασον—Claud. 2.277–8 *desine festis animum, Proserpina, curis et vanis vexare metu*) and the reassurance that things are not as bad as they seem (in Colluthus 338–47, the reasonable scenarios for Helen's disappearance, in Claudian 2.278–306 the promise of a brighter future in Hades). The similarity with Ceres' speech to Proserpina's maid after the tragic discovery of the girl's abduction is even more relevant: like Hermione, she asks questions and wonders about the whereabouts of her daughter (*heu ubi nunc est nata mihi*? 189);[96] the same questions are uttered again, more dramatically, in Ceres' final monologue at the epilogue of the poem, where she wonders whether she will see her daughter again only in her dreams, and in the monologue of

94 In Claud. *Rapt.* 3.163–5 Ceres also surveys all the places in which Proserpina had once sat.

95 This story is also in Call. *h.* 5.115–6. The similarity of this story with that of Agave, who fails to recognise the head of her son and mistakes it for that of a lion (Eur. *Ba.* 1168), was noted by Euripides himself (1291); see Gigli-Piccardi 2003, 424–6.

96 Claud. *Rapt.* 3.180–92.

Proserpina herself straight after her abduction, where the abducted girl also calls upon her mother: *mater, io*![97]

This case may be slightly different from the previous instances: as in Phyllis' case, the person addressed here is not a divinity, like Dionysus (and the Nymphs in the proem); Helen is a character who plays a role in the plot and is not, like Phyllis, brought into the story in the form of a digression.

This appeal to Helen cannot be classified as an indirect audience address:[98] in fact the poet does not reveal himself, as in the previous instances, and the person addressed is not alien to the story. Since the poet does not speak himself in first person to Helen, the fiction is never broken, and the readers are not brought out of the artificial environment; furthermore, because the scene involves an upset girl (in fact, a child, although her reasoning sounds more like that of an adult) who is trying to make sense of her mother's disappearance in the company of her maids, it makes perfect sense that she herself addresses Helen in a completely natural manner. We could say that her continuous switching from one addressee to another grants her behaviour that touch of naivety that we would expect from a child interlocutor.

Colluthus' dramatic effects do not end here, however. Hermione's address to Helen works as an invocation, and shortly after her frantic speech, she falls asleep and, thinking that she is seeing her mother, once again she calls upon her in 374–7:

> χθιζὸν ὀδυρομένην με δόμων ἔκτοσθε φυγοῦσα
> κάλλιπες ὑπνώουσαν ὑπὲρ λεχέων γενετῆρος.
> ποῖον ὄρος μεθέηκα; τίνας προλέλοιπα κολώνας;
> οὕτω καλλικόμοιο μεθ' ἁρμονίην Ἀφροδίτης;

> Yesterday, escaping out of the house, you left me to my sorrow, while I was asleep on my father's bed. Which mountain have I missed? Which hills have I forgotten to search? Or maybe you went with the harmony of Aphrodite's beautiful locks?

Her first address to Helen, followed by this second one, responded to by Helen who appears to her in her dream, now gains dramatic effectiveness: the child calls upon her mother while she is awake and asleep, and in the second instance she finally receives an answer. The questions that Hermione addresses to Helen are also addressed to the readers or an audience: Colluthus

97 Claud. *Rapt*. 3.428–37 and 2.258–9 and 267.

98 Kutzko 2008, 151.

sets some form of expectation, as nobody can answer those questions until Helen does.[99] This passage also seems to echo a similar scene in Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina*, where it is the mother of missing Proserpina who sees her daughter in a dream and asks a number of questions;[100] then, Proserpina responds like Helen in Colluthus: in contrast to Helen, however, Proserpina accuses her mother of having abandoned her and makes her responsible for her abduction.[101] This comparison reveals the interesting twist between a missing/abandoning mother (Helen) and a searching/abandoned daughter (Hermione) in Colluthus, and a missing/abandoned daughter (Proserpina) and a searching/abandoning mother (Ceres) in Claudian.[102] A difference between the two texts lies in the daughters' awareness of their mothers' responsibilities: Proserpina, unlike Hermione, calls Ceres neglectful,[103] while Hermione is oblivious of Helen's voluntary departure; despite the different roles played by the two characters in each poem, however, both daughters end up being abandoned by a neglectful mother, and both mothers are perceived as neglectful.

Let us now return to the final supposition about Helen's whereabouts that Hermione suggests: at 377 she hints at the possibility that her mother may have left with Aphrodite. How did this idea enter Hermione's head? It is an important detail, considering that there is no reference to this possibility in her previous speeches, nor have the maids suggested anything remotely close to this. In fact, the elements that Hermione presents to her mother in the dream

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99 Andrieu 1954, chapters X and XL, and 204, 347, analysing dialogue in Greek and Latin tragedy and comedy, was convinced that classical authors had not designed their works with readers in mind. He supports his thesis by showing how the indications related to scene instructions, or to announcements (such as those for characters coming to or leaving the stage) that were unnecessary for spectators, were on the other hand insufficient for a reader who was trying to rebuild the text as originally played. The indications are inconsistent: sometimes they appear too late, so that a reader could not possibly use them as an aid for interpreting the text. The ancient reader, which Andrieu describes as careful and active, i.e. able and keen to interpret the text with much less information than what we nowadays require, would have then studied the text carefully to decipher it and rebuild its original development on stage. Andrieu concludes that these elements cannot be considered to be a technical system of indications for readers, and that therefore the authors did not aim their works at readers, but at spectators.

100 Claud. *Rapt*. 3.80–96.

101 Claud. *Rapt*. 3.97–108.

102 Hermione's tears (Coll. 329, 340 etc.) correspond in Claudian to Ceres' tears (*Rapt*. 3.128–9).

103 Claud. *Rapt*. 3.97–104 *Heu dira parens nataeque peremptae / immemor* [...] *tantane te nostri tenuere oblivia?* [...] *saeva* [...] *si non omnem pepulisti pectore matrem*.

all refer back to what the girl had said before, except for this one: a) you left me while I was asleep, escaping from the house (374–75), already mentioned in 332–34; b) I have searched the hills but I have not found you (376), already mentioned in 349, 353 and 360. After all the theories that the girl and her maids have thought of, the final supposition that comes from Hermione is surprisingly the right one. Thus, paradoxically, Hermione almost reaches the truth in a deceitful dream, the realm of illusion in which even her mother lies. The Homeric Helen, in contrast, was aware of her role: in *Od.* 4.235–64 she suffers for being a victim of Aphrodite:

> ἄτην δὲ μετέστενον, ἣν Ἀφροδίτη
> δῶχ', ὅτε μ' ἤγαγε κεῖσε φίλης ἀπὸ πατρίδος αἴης,
> παῖδά τ' ἐμὴν νοσφισσαμένην θάλαμόν τε πόσιν τε
> οὔ τευ δευόμενον, οὔτ' ἂρ φρένας οὔτε τι εἶδος.
>
> And I cried for the blindness which Aphrodite gave me, when she led me there from my dear fatherland, abandoning my daughter and my bridal chamber and my husband, inferior to nobody for beauty or wisdom.

In *Il.* 3.121–42 Helen nostalgically misses and cries for her husband, her parents and her native land—however, surprisingly, not for the daughter she has left behind—(139–42), and at 383–420 she follows Aphrodite against her own will, protesting for being an instrument in the goddess' hands and for being forced to return to Paris. In Colluthus' scene, Hermione's final and correct guess about the whereabouts of Helen may reveal her conscious or unconscious awareness of her mother's strange relationship with Aphrodite, which would explain and prepare us for the Homeric Helen, functioning as a sort of prequel to the ambivalent character we find in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.[104]

With the direct address to Helen at 349–57 Colluthus is creating a three-dimensional space in which Hermione, while talking to her maids, is also able to bring into the discussion her absent mother to question her. Later, her appearance in the girl's dream, in response to her second appeal, fulfils Hermione's expectations but also that of the readers, who finally hear Helen's version of the story, or, better still, what she wants her daughter to believe. Of course, by reminding readers that dreams are deceitful, Colluthus plants in his readers the seed of doubt, leaving them wondering whether Helen's voice in the dream should be

104 Helen's ambivalence is widely discussed in Roisman 2006, Maciver 2011, Worman 2001, Austin 1994, Suzuki 1989, and Clader 1976.

believed or not. It is Helen, and not her eidolon, who speaks here, since if this were not the case, her behaviour would not offer any room for judgement to the poet and the readers. The whole scene relies on the contrast between her actions and her own version of the story: she, who first takes ownership for her departure, is not happy to blame Paris. If an eidolon were speaking, this contrast would not arise. Paschalis wonders who else would have believed this version of the story; the fact that Colluthus makes Helen tell her version of the story to a child, in a deceitful dream, is quite ironic.[105] Helen's lie can be interpreted as a selfish way to protect Hermione from the harsh reality of a mother who has consciously abandoned her family; Helen could be lying due to guilt, or she could simply be refusing to take responsibility for her actions. In any case, by making Helen lie to her own daughter, as we shall see later, Colluthus is indirectly judging her as a neglectful mother.

### 3.2 *Paris*

Another similar case is found in 294–9, where Paris, who has just explained to Helen the purpose of his visit, speaks of her first in the third person, as if she were not standing there in front of him:

> ἡ δὲ περικλήιστον, ἐμῶν ἀντάξιον ἔργων,
> νύμφην ἱμερόεσσαν ἐμοὶ κατένευσεν ὀπάσσαι,
> ἣν Ἑλένην ἐνέπουσι, κασιγνήτην Ἀφροδίτης,
> ἧς ἕνεκεν τέτληκα καὶ οἴδματα τόσσα περῆσαι,
> δεῦρο γάμον κεράσωμεν, ἐπεὶ Κυθέρεια κελεύει·
> μή με καταισχύνειας, ἐμὴν μὴ Κύπριν ἐλέγξῃς.

> And she promised that she would give me a worthy reward in return of what I did for her, a famous and desirable bride, the one who they call Helen, sister of Aphrodite. It is for her sake that I have endured to cross so many seas. Come; let's join together in marriage, since Cytherea commands. Do not dishonour me, and do not test Cypris.

He then suddenly switches to the first person, initially in a jussive subjunctive exhorting Helen to join him in marriage according to Aphrodite's orders, and then prompting her directly in the second person singular not to despise him or his protector goddess.

Paris' progression, within three lines, from a detached account about somebody else into a straightforward invitation, and finally into a plea not to be

105 Paschalis 2008, 139–140.

rejected, says much about his psychological condition at the time of his arrival at Helen's house. Speaking to Helen about Helen as if she were a third person shows his lack of emotional connection with her: as noted before, she is just a reward. Her beauty is not something he is experiencing for himself there and then, but is only something he has previously heard of (περικλήιστον … ἣν Ἑλένην ἐνέπουσι) that adds value to his future possession.

His claim to have endured such seas,[106] which comes straight after this attempt to cash in his prize, sounds ironic, as it brings to mind other heroes who legitimately made such claims, such as Odysseus[107] and Leander.[108] However, Colluthus probably meant to ironically respond to Jason's disenchanted words in Ap. Rh. *Arg*. 3.388–9 τίς δ' ἂν τόσον οἶδμα περῆσαι / τλαίη ἑκὼν ὀθνεῖον ἐπὶ κτέρας; "who would willingly dare to cross so wide a sea in order to rob someone else's good?" Paris is not said to steal in Colluthus' version of the myth, but in some versions of the story his abduction of Helen is associated with stealing from Menelaus' palace.[109] The linguistic parallel (Colluthus τέτληκα … οἴδματα τόσσα περῆσαι 297, Apollonius τόσον οἶδμα περῆσαι τλαίη 388) is obvious, and an educated reader would have been able to detect this subtle irony.[110] He then asks Helen not to despise him or put him to shame, as if he were not sure that Aphrodite's will is actually going to be fulfilled, as if he feared failure. Paris' fear of being let down by Helen despite Aphrodite's promise also explains the compliment that he pays to Helen at the end of his introductory speech, where he alludes to Helen's superiority among Argive women (300–304).

On this occasion, Colluthus' aim is mainly to portray Paris as completely uninterested in Helen as a person and as a woman; he appears insensitive to her beauty and unreceptive to the signals she unconsciously sends him. Ultimately, the poet's technique of switching subjects in this case achieves the effect of presenting an uncommunicative and imbalanced pair.

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106 The motif is present in Nonnus, see Livrea 1968a, 211. Paris' exaggeration of his travelling effort is possibly closer to Hermes' words in *Od*. 5.100–101 τίς δ' ἂν ἑκὼν τοσσόνδε διαδράμοι ἁλμυρὸν ὕδωρ / ἄσπετον; "who would willingly accept to cross so much endless sea?"

107 Odysseus was πολύτλας (Paris boasts τέτληκα), but Paris' journey is not comparable to Odysseus' as it must have lasted no more than six or seven days; Magnelli 2008, 157.

108 Leander, in Musaeus 203, says Παρθένε, σὸν δι' ἔρωτα καὶ ἄγριον οἶδμα περήσω "Maiden, for the sake of your love I will cross even the wild sea". This line is modelled on Nonn. *Dion*. 42.363 παρθένε, σὸν δι' ἔρωτα καὶ οὐρανὸν οὐκέτι ναίω, "Maiden, because of your love I no longer inhabit the sky". However, Leander was really risking his life for Hero!

109 As in *Cypria*, and in Dictis 1.3, (Rocca 1997, 171); see also Sev. Alex. *Eth*. 3.

110 Magnelli 2008, 157–8.

What does Colluthus aim to achieve by using this narrative technique? In both cases the switch from narrative to direct address shows the level of interaction that the speaking character wishes to have with the third character; for instance, Hermione speaks of Helen first in the third person, then, by switching to the second person and addressing her directly, she shows her desire to become close and contact (see, touch) her mother. In contrast, Paris speaks of her interlocutor, Helen, in the third person first: by doing so, he shows his unconscious wish to stay emotionally detached from Helen, and to treat the whole matter as a business with no sentiments involved; only after stating his entitlements to her as a prize does he address her in the second person, but only to order her to respect Aphrodite's will and marry him.

In Hermione's case, the reader can hear the pitiful cry and participate in her desperation, not least due to a number of elements heightening the pathos of the situation: she is a child, a girl, she has been abandoned by her mother in her sleep, her father is also absent. With Paris, the opposite process takes place, and the reader witnesses a very unemotional man knocking on the door of a woman whose beauty he is insensitive to; she is such an object in his mind that he speaks of her as a distant reward. The lack of visual and erotic interaction shown by Paris towards a very involved Helen works in harmony with the way in which he chooses to speak to her.

## 4 Direct Speech, Psychology and Evaluation of Characters

Psychological interactions between characters and emotions are not exposed in Colluthus' poem in direct ways but are revealed clearly through characters' behaviour and speeches. For instance, the one-directionality between Helen and Paris is revealed by the imbalance of their reciprocal visual communication. In the previously outlined cases of Paris and Hermione, the characters' feelings towards their interlocutor are revealed by the direct or indirect way in which they address them.

A key device employed in ethopoiiai to achieve a highly pathetic style,[111] direct speech is the chief instrument used by Colluthus to tell the story in a dramatic way through the words of the characters who are thus allowed to express their views. It can convey a subjective view, a lie, a reasoning that the character is processing, as in the case of Hermione. Direct speech, as well as description,

111 Nonnus employs direct speeches more than any other post-Homeric poet, choosing especially monologues (rather than dialogues) to emphasise the speaker's view, and relying on rhetorical devices aimed at a public audience (Agosti 2005a, 46–7).

is generally considered a non-narrative element, although it can convey an embedded narrative told by a secondary narrator.[112] In the *Abduction*, the narrator chooses to tell most of Helen's story through direct speech; it is through her words that narratees are made aware of her decision, while the description of her visual behaviour helps in revealing her inner emotions.

Helen's charm and popularity were directly linked to the ambiguity of her behaviour. This duplicity was accepted as part of her appeal by Greek sources, but Latin sources always present her in a negative light,[113] with the exception of Ovid, as we shall see. According to Rocca the choice of Roman literature to opt for a negative interpretation of Helen's behaviour (a choice which seals her role in the story as guilty) is explained by the inability of realist Romans to assimilate Helen's two-faced nature into their tradition;[114] Roman authors therefore chose the easiest path of denigration.[115]

The main concern is whether Helen has left out of her own free will (which would make her guilty and adulterous) or her actions can be blamed on somebody else (Eros, Aphrodite, Paris): how does Colluthus deal with Helen's duplicity? Does he make her an adulterous woman and hard-hearted mother, or is she a pitiful female victim of external forces such as love, persuasion or a god's will?

The issue of who was to be blamed for the war is already present in Homer, as seen earlier:[116] in *Il.* 3.128–33 responsibility is imputed to Ares, Helen, and also the armies who crave for victory.[117] However, Helen's responsibility is never questioned: in *Od.* 4.90–2 Menelaus openly blames her, and she in return admits her guilt at 261–4. Alcaeus condemned Helen's insane decision to follow Paris (fr. 42 LP), while Sappho defends her actions in the name of love (fr. 16 LP). Stesichorus' *palinodia* of Helen,[118] in which Helen is rehabilitated to a faithful and innocent wife, is partly shared by Herodotus, who accepts that

112 De Jong 2004, 8.

113 Virg. *Aen.* 2.567–74 and Sen. *Troad.* 866–7 and 871–87 for instance offer a contemptible portrait.

114 Rocca 1995, 34.

115 Hellenistic versions of the myth could not have inspired Romans, as these mainly focussed on the pastoral aspects of the story and did not add anything new to the version of the Cypria: Theocr. 18.26–31 for instance lingers on Helen's divine beauty that makes her superior to all women.

116 Palumbo Stracca 1993, 302.

117 Kennedy 1986, 9.

118 Known to us only via Isocrates *Hel.* 64 and Pl. *Phaedr.* 243ab and *Rep.* 576c.

Helen did not go to Troy but keeps within the Homeric tradition by speaking of adultery. For Herodotus, all guilt lies with Paris, who has betrayed his host's trust and Helen,[119] and is responsible of ἀδικία and ἔργον ἀνοσιώτατον.[120]

Euripides offers the first direct tradition of the "new Helen", redeemed of all responsibilities: firstly in the *Electra* of 414, an anticipation of the version of the story that he will bring to stage two years later in the *Helena*: embracing the Stesichorean *palinodia* completely, he makes Helen's faithfulness (and her active intention to remain faithful in particular)[121] the key to the new perspective. Helen is sorry for the tragedy she has caused but she is not apologising: responsibility lies with the εἴδωλον, which has gained her a bad reputation (δύσκλεια). Her rehabilitation is also full in the eyes of Menelaus, and she manages to return to her previous status, from which she had been removed by Hera and Zeus' will. Euripides had a clear ethical message to convey: the battle between σῶμα and ὄνομα, and between being and appearing, plays a large role in his version, which was followed by many.

Gorgias redeems Helen completely in any possible scenario: in whichever way we choose to read the events, somebody else is to blame. Isocrates goes further by even redeeming Paris. Ovid's rhetorical organisation of Paris' speech depends on him.

In his epithalamion of Helen, Theocritus portrayed her as a radiant girl on her wedding day and managed to avoid almost completely the thorny matter of her responsibilities.[122]

Ovid rehabilitated Helen by blaming the persuasive power of the logos and offering a version of the events which clarified the psychological processes behind her emotions. Aided by the fact that the medium of the epistula supports an intimate dialogue, Ovid's version presents Helen's duplicity from an emotive perspective: the reader can clearly perceive her not-too-hidden wish to leave, her struggle with the weight of her conscience. Readers can then sympathise with Helen, as they are firstly brought along her emotional journey, and secondly they can testify to the impact of *peitho* on her decisions. According to Rocca, in Ovid there is no trace of an alleged responsibility on Helen's part: the poet acknowledges the almost magical influence of persuasion,[123] which

119 Her. *Hist*. 2.114 ἐξαπατήσας τὴν γυναῖκα.

120 Her. *Hist*. 2.115.

121 Monaco 1981, 150.

122 There is a subtle note of tragic irony in the wedding wishes in *Id*. 18.50 (Palumbo Stracca 1993, 302–3).

123 Persuasion has often been compared to magic fluid.

up to then had been affirmed in the Roman tradition only in relation to public contexts, to the world of private and interpersonal relationships, and by doing so he redeems Helen from any guilt. Rocca spreads this consideration to Colluthus as well, identifying this lack of blame in Helen's silent and hesitant reaction to Paris' words in 305–306.[124]

However, Colluthus' imitation of Ovid *Her*. 16 (discussed point by point by Rocca)[125] is not limited to specific stages of the story but is clear also in his treatment of Helen's behaviour. Helen's visual behaviour reveals her psychological and emotive reaction to Paris' words and especially sight;[126] her emotions are clearly readable through her body language and the codified visual behaviour she displays. Amazement, curiosity, the search for familiarity and hunger for physical contact are all easily detectable from her description.

In the same way, her hesitation reveals the weight of her conscience: as in Ovid, she is aware of the moral questions that will arise from her decision to leave with Paris. However, Helen's desire only needs a few seconds to surface again: she is left hesitant and speechless after Paris' words (305–306), but then suddenly she finds her voice again as her admiration for the walls of Troy that have been so courageously laid by Paris' ancestors cannot be kept silent and she admits her desire (ἤθελον) to see them (308–313), revealing a sudden desire to see the sights in Troy that mirrors Paris' touristic journey on his way to Sparta. Immediately afterwards, her wish becomes an order for Paris to bring her to Troy (ἀγρέο νῦν ... με κομίζων 314) and climaxes in ἕψομαι (315), a clear admission that her decision is voluntary and active. Here, Helen wants to

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124 Rocca 1995, 36.

125 Rocca 1995, 41–4. Colluthus imitates Ovid *Her*. 16 only for the speech of Paris to Helen. He then stops following Ovid altogether for the rest of the story (there are a number of discordances between the two versions of the myth, listed in Livrea 1968a, XVIII–XX and in Rocca 1995, 46 n. 48: among these, Paris sails with favorable winds in Ovid, while he meets a storm in Colluthus). Livrea explained this partial imitation of Ovid with a lost Hellenistic model which would have been followed by Colluthus; Rocca 1995, 38–41, instead, suggests that Colluthus may have used scholastic suasoriae or ethopoiiai based on Ovid, taking into consideration that Latin was studied in Egypt and many papyri of Cicero, Livy and Virgil have been found with interlinear translations, and also considering Virgil's influence on Quintus' poetry, for instance. For more on the relationship between late Greek poets and Latin literature see the Conclusions.

126 His speech on the greatness of his ancestors does not produce an effect on her as much as his looks; the same conclusion has been drawn from Paris' reaction to the sight of Aphrodite's bare chest versus the speeches of the goddesses before the beauty contest. With Colluthus, it is all about looks.

follow Paris jut as much as she wanted to commit to faithfulness to Menelaus and to defend her honour in Eur. *Hel.* 63–4 τὸν πάλαι δ' ἐγὼ πόσιν τιμῶσα.[127] The two passages show the two extreme opposites of how Helen's behaviour could be interpreted, but share the same readiness for accountability and action. In Colluthus, Helen feels confident in her decision, as she justifies it with her intention to duly obey Aphrodite's orders (ὡς Κυθέρεια γάμων βασίλεια κελεύει 315): in her mind, it is not Paris' beauty that makes her leave with him but a religious duty. This legal binding of Helen to Paris seals their exemption from any (legal) responsibility for their actions and their consequences, suggesting that Aphrodite should be blamed instead. However, readers may not be easily convinced.

With her conscience at peace, Helen can now leave. On the other hand, the reader, who has witnessed Helen's erotic fascination with Paris, is not fooled by her explanation and is very aware of what has made her leave. Unlike in Ovid then, where her justification is offered by the poet in the form of the persuasion of Paris' words, in Colluthus Helen does not avail of the same option, as Paris' speech is not what convinces her to leave. Helen's duplicity in Colluthus is resolved once again, like in Ovid and in Gorgias, with the psychological interpretation of her behaviour; however, while in Ovid persuasion is what manipulates her destiny, in Colluthus it is eros, intended here as attraction and lust.

At this stage there can be some forgiveness for her: readers may sympathise with her, whose destiny to abandon her husband and daughter has already been decided by Aphrodite, and whose mind has been blurred by Eros. Moreover, let us not forget how beautiful Paris was (even the poet could not restrain himself from complimenting him as being superior in beauty even to Dionysus), and the boredom or loneliness that Helen may have endured during Menelaus' absence.[128]

Is this the final evaluation of Helen that Colluthus wants to convey? After Paris carries her to Troy, proud beyond reason of Aphrodite's promise (324–7), Helen only makes one more appearance in the story,[129] in circumstances that deserve more attention.

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127 Both statements are in the first person, and in particular the ἐγώ in Euripides marks Helen's self-declaration of loyalty to her previous husband, see Monaco 1981, 149–51.

128 Which is not told by Colluthus until line 384; Menelaus, like Paris' wife Oenone, is almost cancelled from the story, with bare references made to them, see Paschalis 1008, 145.

129 Choosing one character to focus on and to develop is an obligatory choice for late antique poets, due to the relatively short length of the poem; for instance, Triphiodorus concentrates on Cassandra, while Agamemnon and Laocoon are almost left out of the poem.

She appears in a dream to Hermione, who falls asleep while desperately seeking her mother. First of all, it should be noted that Colluthus clearly wants to warn us about the nature of dreams: immediately after Helen's decision to leave and before her appearance in Hermione's dream, he inserts two descriptions of what sleep and dreams are. In the first passage (318–23), Night opens the two gates of dreams;[130] one is that of truthful oracles, but the other is that of illusion, feeder of vain dreams, (δολοφροσύνης, κενεῶν θρέπτειραν ὀνείρων 323). In the second passage (366–71), Sleep and Death are said to be brothers who share the same destiny, and dreams are once again an illusion (δολοφροσύνῃσιν ὀνείρων 371). Unsurprisingly, there is a close resemblance between Colluthus' lines 318–20 νὺξ δέ, πόνων ἄμπαυμα μετ' ἠελίοιο κελεύθους, / ὕπνον ἐλαφρίζουσα, παρήορον ὤπασεν ἠῶ / ἀρχομένην, "and night dispensed sleep, rest from the works after the journey of the sun, and brought along with her the beginning of a new dawn", and Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina* 3.404–405: *iamque soporiferas nocturna silentia terris explicuere vices*, "and now night silence unfolded upon the earth the ever-returning time of sleep";[131] Claudian had also mentioned the deceitfulness of dreams in *Rapt.* 3.96, where Ceres wonders whether it is a vain shadow that is deceiving her, *an vana fallimur umbra?*

We are reminded of the deceptive nature of dreams just before Hermione and Helen speak in the child's dream: in fact, while she has already entered her dream, Hermione thinks she is seeing her mother (μητέρα παπταίνειν ὠίσατο 372), but she is not really seeing her. In this dream, Helen responds to her daughter's call and says: "My sorrowful child, do not blame me, for I have suffered a terrible fate. The deceptive man who came yesterday took me away" (380). Her statement is unquestionably a lie if compared directly with the one she delivered as her decision to leave with Paris ("Come now; carry me from Sparta to Troy. I will follow you, as Cytherea, queen of marriage, commands" 314–315): she had actively declared her own decision to follow Paris (ἕψομαι), and now she blames him for kidnapping her (ἥρπασεν).

130 The image of true and false dreams is borrowed from Mosch. *Eur.* 1–5 Εὐρώπῃ ποτὲ Κύπρις ἐπὶ γλυκὺν ἧκεν ὄνειρον, / νυκτὸς ὅτε τρίτατον λάχος ἵσταται ἐγγύθι δ' ἠώς, / ὕπνος ὅτε γλυκίων μέλιτος βλεφάροισιν ἐφίζων / λυσιμελὴς πεδάᾳ μαλακῷ κατὰ φάεα δεσμῷ, / εὖτε καὶ ἀτρεκέων ποιμαίνεται ἔθνος ὀνείρων, "Once upon a time Europa had of the Cyprian a delightful dream. 'Twas the third watch o' the night when 'tis nigh dawn and the Looser of Limbs is come down honey-sweet upon the eyelids for to hold our twin light in gentle bondage, 'twas at that hour which is the outgoing time of the flock of true dreams" (trans. J.M. Edmonds). However, as always Colluthus is mixing Homeric and Nonnian references: in 320, Coll. δοιὰς δὲ πύλας—*Od.* 19.562–7, δοιαὶ γάρ τε πύλαι; Coll. ὤιξεν—Nonn. *Dion.* 27.2 ἀντολίης ὤιξε. See James 1981, 141–2.

131 Trans. C. Gruzelier.

Having previously taken ownership for the choice and even justified it with religious duties in her own mind, Helen now denies all responsibility for her actions and asks not to be blamed, since she has been the victim of a terrible fate (μὴ μέμφεο δεινὰ παθούσῃ);[132] it goes without saying that she is here putting the blame on the divine will, but also on Paris, who is now an ἀπατήλιος ἀνήρ. However, his deceptiveness had not been detected before by her (with the exception of Paris revealing his sweet voice, μειλιχίην ἠμείβετο γῆρυν 279) and is labelled as such only now for the first time: as discussed above, Helen had been persuaded to leave not by Paris' speech but by his looks. This contrasts with Mus. *Her.* 101–102, where Leander's seducing strategy is openly treacherous: λοξὰ δ' ὀπιπεύων δολερὰς ἐλέλιζεν ὀπωπὰς / νεύμασιν ἀφθόγγοισι παραπλάζων φρένα κούρης, "with oblique insidious looks and silent hints he attempted to seduce the girl's heart", and his desire is δολόεντα (103).

With ἀπατήλιος, Helen is clearly referring to the deceptiveness of his words, the irresistible power of the λόγος that made her innocent *in toto* for Gorgias.[133] In Claudian, Proserpina's abduction is blamed by her mother Ceres on Venus' persuasion in Rapt. 3.227 *persuadet*.

There may be a number of explanations for the false version of the story given by Helen to Hermione. Helen may wish to tell her child a story that would be less upsetting than the truth: it would be hard to imagine a scene in which a mother openly admits to her daughter that she has voluntarily abandoned her (possibly in a tragedy?). Helen may also be lying to herself: once she has left Sparta, she could have suddenly realised the mistake she has made, and now puts the blame on Paris to cover up her responsibilities as there is no turning back. It is not clear whether the dream is voicing Helen's true disenchantment or if it is Hermione's own imagination.[134] But if we look back at how Colluthus has introduced the circumstances in which this lie is told, we should know that dreams are deceptive, and therefore we should expect nothing but a false version of reality. In this logic, it makes perfect sense that Helen lies.

The fact that she lies in a dream, to a young child, makes it even more ironic to the reader: who else is going to believe her version of the story?[135] Once more, readers are not fooled by Helen, and as they earlier knew that the real reason for her escape was her lust for Paris, they now know that she has left of

132 Helen also played the victim in *Il.* 3.176.

133 Gorgias 4.1–3 εἰ δὲ λόγος ὁ πείσας καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπατήσας, but especially 5.1–2: εἰ λόγωι ἐπείσθη, οὐκ ἠδίκησεν ἀλλ' ἠτύχησεν, εἴρηται.

134 Magnelli 2008, 165.

135 Paschalis 2008, 139–40 notes how Colluthus uses Hermione as the perfect vehicle for Helen's version of events.

her own accord. Ironically, it does not seem that even Hermione will be easily convinced by her mother's version of the events: in such deceptive circumstances, she eventually sees the truth, as, for the first time since she has begun to search for her mother, she wonders whether she may have left to pursue harmonious Aphrodite (οὕτω καλλικόμοιο μεθ' ἁρμονίην Ἀφροδίτης 377). Aphrodite is conjugal like-mindedness (ὁμόνοια), the virtue that plays a vital role in a successful marriage, that very accord that Athena lacked (186). Here, the choice of ἁρμονίη seems slightly unexpected, as the word refers to marital sex. Is Colluthus attempting a risky scenario, making Hermione (who, as we know from other sources, is nine years of age) discuss her mother's sexual activity?

The child had never before considered a voluntary departure in the wide range of possibilities that she and her maids had considered, but now she associates her disappearance with a marriage to another man. However, it is only a short-lived glimpse of truth for poor Hermione, as, when she wakes up, she sends for her father by presenting the same, false version that Helen has just told her in the dream: a lawless (ἀθεμίστιος) man came yesterday and stole the house of all its beauty.[136]

There can be no doubt as to where Colluthus stands on this. The poet makes no secret of his opinion of Helen, referring to her as a reward (ἀντάξιον 294), but certainly he states his position in 327, where he defines her a φόρτον: this word can mean "freight of war" but also "rubbish" or "burden"; whether the poet meant either of these meanings, his definition is certainly not flattering. Another more subtle allusion to the nature of the poet's evaluation of Helen's behaviour may be perceived in one of the possible scenarios that Hermione's maids suggest to the girl to explain her disappearance: in 342, they hypothesise that she may have gone to a gathering of women (νυμφάων ἐς ὁμήγυριν ἀγρομενάων). In Musaeus *Her*. 34, Hero, who is said to be chaste and modest, has never taken part in gatherings of women (ἀγρομένῃσι … γυναιξίν). Nothing is said about the nature of these gatherings, but it is difficult not to draw some conclusions from the contrasting behaviour of the two characters.

In conclusion, Helen's responsibility appears clear in Colluthus. The poet makes her fully accountable for her own destiny by making her state herself first her own intention to follow Paris and then the lie in which she blames Paris. If Colluthus had made his evaluations in the narrative, we could have

136 Interestingly, in Claudian Ceres disbelieved the dream in which Proserpina appeared to her, and *gaudet non vera fuisse*, "she rejoiced that it was not true", *Rapt*. 3.111. However, later she reconsiders the omens that have appeared to her, and guilt for having abandoned her daughter while indulging in dances emerges, 3.124–33.

deduced that this was his opinion of Helen, but the fact that the character is speaking in the first person in both cases makes her ethical position clearer and possibly even worse,[137] and I believe that there can be no doubts as to where guilt lies for Colluthus. However, it is obvious that Colluthus had no interest in producing a moralising reading of the myth,[138] and irony, as always, plays a role in this scene too. A child who manages to see the truth against all odds, in her dreams, despite a lying mother and what her adult maids say, is quite ironic: in this lies the twist to which Colluthus has accustomed us and we almost expect at this stage. As clearly noted by Magnelli 2008, 165, his humour is demonstrated in the handling of the mythological tradition:[139] he borrows the elements that have always played a significant role in the post-Homeric debate on Helen's guilt or innocence, and constructs a humorous scene in which ultimately nobody is fooled by Helen.

137 As it would be the case in narrative, in the speech the mitigating circumstances of indirect report are not there.

138 I agree here with Magnelli 2008, 163–5, although I do not share his interpretation of Helen as a "colourless character".

139 Magnelli 2008, 165.

# Conclusion

We know very little about Colluthus. The *Suda* indicates that he hailed from Lycopolis, in the Egyptian Thebaid, dates him to the reign of Anastasius (491–518 AD) and provides some information about his works, but nothing else is said about his life. Working with such limited information on a poet's life can be a stimulus to evaluate his work through an almost unbiased lens, but it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions about some aspects of his poetics. Colluthus' only surviving work also lacks obvious references to his contemporary context,[1] which makes our task even more challenging. However, it is possible to form a rather clear picture of the poet's views (and thus his context) through his text. For instance, although we do not have information about Colluthus' faith, we have seen in Chapter 4 that a number of evaluations in the poem are suggestive of the poet's perspective. These observations do not allow us to establish whether Colluthus was, for instance, a Christian,[2] but they at least fit in with the religious turmoil of Colluthus' times and the general opinion that this was a period of transition. In this section, the main findings of this work are summarised, beginning from a survey of the information that can help define Colluthus and proceeding to a discussion of his approach to genres, contemporary culture, narrative techniques and audiences.

Let us begin with Colluthus as a poet in late fifth-century Egypt. It is possible to suggest a few possibilities regarding his activity as a poet, based on evidence in our possession about some of his contemporaries. One thing we would like to know about Colluthus, for instance, is whether he interacted with the imperial court at Byzantium or was active in the provincial Thebaid. At the time, men of letters would often move to the most prestigious schools of the Eastern Empire (Byzantium, Antioch, Gaza, Alexandria, Athens, Berytus) to be educated with a

1 Carvounis and Hunter 2008b, 6.

2 A linguistic analysis of the *Abduction* in search of any words that gained a Christian meaning, on the model of that conducted by Shorrock 2011 on Nonnus' works, led to no evidence, with very few exceptions such as the use of the epithet διάκτορος in 123: the word was used by Nonnus (e.g. *Par*. 1.216, 4.98) always in a grammatical and philological exegetic mode, typical of the Alexandrian use, alluding to the double meaning of "messenger" and "servant", but in *Par*. 5.21–2 it also alludes to its meaning, within the exegetic tradition of Jesus, of "son" and "servant of God", inviting a juxtaposition of Hermes, Gabriel and Jesus, see Agosti 2005, 24–5. Unfortunately, since the epithet only occurs on this occasion, it is difficult to establish whether Colluthus was simply resuscitating another Homeric fossil (as he often does) or whether he also meant to allude to its Christian significance.

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view to a public career; in many cases they would end up working in the imperial administration as bureaucrats or lawyers, and in some fortunate cases they would achieve the honour of joining the court and working on imperial propaganda. Poetry was written and enjoyed by these poets, making its reception quite a self-contained environment, as we learn from the many relationships that linked various poets of the *Anthology*, for instance.

This was the case of Paul the Silentiary (540–575), a functionary and a poet at the court of Justinian. Agathias (536–582), his protégé and son-in-law, moved from Myrina in Asia Minor to Alexandria and then Byzantium, and secured a position as a Scholasticus (lawyer) at the imperial court. However, he never managed to earn a living solely from poetry as Paul did: he often complains about his hard work as a high-ranking legal functionary at the Royal Stoa,[3] and often criticises his fellow contemporaries who wrote panegyrics to gain a better position. Christodorus of Coptos also moved from Egypt to Byzantium to work at the court of Anastasius, where he wrote epic and encomiastic works.

Poetic activity was also lively in the peripheral regions: Procopius of Gaza never left the province, and composed a panegyric for Anastasius on the occasion of the visit of the emperor to Gaza, around 512, to inaugurate a statue of him; although it remains uncertain who was present at the public reading of panegyrics performed in the provinces, we know that a copy of each panegyric was sent to Byzantium and that some poets were active in the province. During the reign of Anastasius, provincial cities like Gaza enjoyed a lively intellectual activity due to the stability and economic prosperity of the times: here, too, as in Byzantium, men of letters worked under imperial patronage and were often commissioned to compose panegyrical works.[4] Scholars such as Zosimus and Eutocius from Ascalon, and Procopius, Aeneas, Choricius and Timotheus came from the School of Gaza, which flourished between the fifth century AD and the Arab conquest in 635. This important school of rhetoric attracted many scholars even from Athens: the majority of them were Christian and refined connoisseurs of the classical tradition, and they represented a successful symbiosis between the two cultures.

Did Colluthus leave Lycopolis, then, and did he work at the court of Anastasius? It is plausible to assume that he left his hometown, as he could not complete his education in the Thebaid, and since it is clear that his erudition was equal to that of other contemporaries, it is reasonable to say that he

3 However, he still managed to find money to restore a public restroom in Smyrna, see *AP* 9.662, and Rapp 2005, 387.

4 Haarer 2010, 28.

probably travelled to receive such an education.[5] Thus he was a young man of wealthy background who had the opportunity to complete his education and travelled to study to a bigger centre, perhaps Alexandria or Panopolis.[6] A valid contribution to this discussion is made by the Latin sources[7] used by Colluthus, particularly Ovid and Claudian. Colluthus employs part of *Her*. 16 but does not seem to know the whole epistula, as he presents a version of the story which contrasts radically with the one in Ovid. It has been argued whether Colluthus' imitation of Ovid implies a direct knowledge of the model or whether, as Livrea suggested, we must infer a lost model.[8] It has also been suggested that Colluthus may have accessed Ovid's text indirectly through rhetorical exercises; in fact, the myth of Helen was a popular subject for late antique ethopoiiai,[9] some of which we know were used not only within the educational context but also as models for literary texts: for instance, the monologue of the Indian prince who falls in love with the corpse of a girl in Nonn. *Dion*. 35 shares similarities with Libanius' ethopoiia 12–13 Foerster, featuring Achilles' speech at the sight of dead Penthesilea.[10] However, it is impossible to determine whether Colluthus came in touch with Panopolis and whether he moved from there to Alexandria or Byzantium.

Determining whether Colluthus worked at the court of Anastasius is more challenging. He wrote encomia, and, while we do not possess any information regarding their subject, we can reasonably assume that the subject was Anastasius, given his popularity with Procopius and Priscian. Regarding his epic works, we can presume that the *Calydoniaca* revolved around Anastasius too, given that the emperor's military achievements over the Persians in 506 were also probably the topic of his *Persica*.[11] There seem to be no elements in the *Abduction* that refer back to the poet's own time, so this could have been his only non-propagandistic work.

Analysis of Colluthus' relationship with Latin literature may help us form a clearer picture of Colluthus as a court poet. In general, scholars have rejected the possibility that later Greek poets may have used Latin models for their

5 Hernández de la Fuente 2004, 395.

6 Alesso 2002, 23.

7 Regarding Colluthus' possible knowledge of Latin, see below.

8 See Rocca 1995, 41 n. 34; De Lorenzi 1929, 28–48.

9 Rocca 1995, 46.

10 Another example is Calliope's consolation speech to Thetis after Achilles' death, which appears only in an ethopoiia on P.Graves and in Quintus' *Posthomerica* 3; see Carvounis and Hunter 2008b, 7.

11 Cameron 1965c, 481; Carvounis and Hunter 2008b, 4.

works for many years,[12] explaining textual analogies with the hypothesis of a lost Hellenistic model. Since the end of the last century, however, the concept of Latin sources for later Greek poetry began to gain popularity, after the dependence of Quintus,[13] Triphiodorus[14] and Chariton on the *Aeneid* was cautiously demonstrated.[15] Nonnus' dependence on Ovid also became the object of studies,[16] and the question was then posed for other authors too. Knowledge of Latin was proven in Egypt since the third century AD:[17] papyri of Cicero, Livy and Virgil with facing page or interlinear translation reveal how Latin, the language of the imperial administration, was studied.[18] It cannot be determined whether Colluthus read Ovid in Latin or in translation, or even if he learned of this text through scholastic exercises; however, the linguistic analogies between Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina* (in Latin) and his Greek *Gigantomachy* and Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*, together with those of content, structure and style discussed in Chapter 2 and 4, lead one to believe that Colluthus read at least this model in the original Latin.[19] Claudian's *Gigantomachy* seems to be an established model already among late antique poets: his metaphor of poetry as navigation presented in the proem is remembered by Nonnus, John of Gaza, and Paul the Silentiary,[20] and it is also present in the proem of the *Abduction*, although we cannot be sure of its dependence on Claudian. Colluthus may have followed this tradition and developed a deeper interest in his other texts (in Latin). The relevance of Latin within the Eastern Empire is personified by Priscian of Caesarea, an Algerian γραμματικός who was active in Byzantium; like Procopius of Gaza, Priscian wrote a panegyric of Anastasius but always considered himself a Roman, and his criteria for the emperor's praise are based on Roman and Christian values.[21] Claudian himself, a native of Alexandria who was active in Rome and at the court of Milan, composed

12 This is a controversial issue, as well put by Carvounis 2008b, 6. See also Gärtner 2005 and James and Lee 2000.

13 Hadjittofi 2007.

14 Miguélez-Cavero 2013, 64–70.

15 Gärtner 2005, and James and Lee 2000.

16 D'Ippolito 1964, 76; Carvounis 2008b, 3.

17 A comprehensive overview of the uses of latin in Roman Egypt is Evans 2012.

18 Depaw 2012; Alesso 2002, 22; Rocca 1995, 38–41.

19 Livrea 2000, 441–5.

20 Agosti 2006a, 48.

21 For instance, Priscian compares Anastasius to Nerva, Marcus Aurelius and Trajan, and links his lineage to that of Pompey; he also praises him for his *pietas* towards the barbarians he had defeated.

in both Greek and Latin at the end of the fourth century AD.[22] It is therefore possible to assume that Colluthus, as a scholar of his time, learned Latin and was thus able to make specific allusions to his models, imitating Claudian's language in particular.

This work has surveyed the similarities between Colluthus and his models, canonised and contemporaries; Homer, Apollonius, and especially Nonnus are constantly referred to,[23] but Colluthus also often engages with other models according to the genre or context with which he is playing. For instance, while creating the visual scene of Helen and Paris' meeting he draws on Heliodorus and other Neoplatonic references derived from the novel; in the bucolic proem Callimachus and Theocritus are prime references; he models his Aphrodite and the episode of Hermione's abandonment on Claudian and Musaeus. Drawing conclusions on the similarities of Colluthus' text with that of another contemporary, Christodorus, may help us to define the portrait of the poet that we have started to paint, i.e. a poet who perhaps worked at the imperial court.

Both natives of the Thebaid, Colluthus and Christodorus composed works of epic and encomiastic nature on presumably similar subjects: as discussed above, Colluthus probably composed his propagandistic works, *Persica* and *Calydoniaca* about the imperial campaigns to protect the border, while it is certain that Christodorus' *Isaurica* revolved around Anastasius' victory in 497, and a panegyric of the emperor is included in his ekphrasis of the statues of the gymnasium of Zeuxippos (*AP* 2). A number of textual connections between the two poets, especially with regard to the description of Aphrodite and Paris,[24] prompted Tissoni to suggest that Christodorus may have drawn for inspiration from the epigrams celebrating Praxiteles' Aphrodite of Cnydus (*APl* 160, 162, 163, 168):[25] this may also have been the case for Colluthus, who probably composed his portrait of Aphrodite on the basis of observation of some artworks, as we have seen in Chapter 3. Paris is also described as βούκολος by both poets: this can either be an ekphrasis of a real detail, as Paris was often

22 According to Gruzelier 1993, xvii, Claudian's Latin has an element of novelty.

23 Late antique epic poetry (Quintus and Triphiodorus) also represents a constant model for Colluthus, mainly in his linguistic choices.

24 For example, in the ekphrasis of the statue of Aphrodite (99–101), Christodorus employs similar words to describe the goddess' golden veil as those used by Colluthus in the same context; the goddess bares her chest in both passages.

25 Tissoni 2000a, 130.

represented as a shepherd in artworks, or perhaps an echo of the rich earlier literary tradition about him.[26]

Colluthus' and Christodorus' literary affinities may lead to another interesting conclusion regarding the philosophical culture in which Colluthus may have worked. Christodorus' Neoplatonic views are clear in his works both prior[27] and subsequent to his imperial appointment in 497,[28] an element that leads us to assume that Neoplatonism was at least accepted at Anastasius' court.[29] Nonnus' awareness of contemporary Neoplatonic interpretations is well known.[30] Are there any elements in the *Abduction* that allow us to see a connection between Colluthus and Platonism and Neoplatonism? Aside from a couple of allusions to passages by Apollonius in which Colluthus echoes Empedocles, we have seen that Colluthus embraces the erotic theories of Platonic origin (re-elaborated and codified by the novel, especially Heliodorus) of the eye as the channel through which love enters one's soul. These two elements alone are insufficient for us to assess the extent of Colluthus' philosophical position, as they could be derived from the imitation of Apollonius' passages). More significant evidence is provided by the episode of Paris' journey by sea, which can be interpreted as a Neoplatonic metaphor for a man braving matter and the senses,[31] similar to Odysseus' journey and more relevant to Leander's sea-crossing in Musaeus and to the Giant's fall in the sea in Claudian's *Gigantomachy*,[32] one of Colluthus' closest models. If we accept that Colluthus worked at the imperial court, and by virtue of his literary affinity with fellow countryman and court poet Christodorus, it would be reasonable to assume that Colluthus also shared this philosophical tradition.

Understanding the impact of Neoplatonism on Colluthus unfortunately does not shed any more light on the nature of his other works, but it contributes to increasing our understanding of the *Abduction* as a potentially metaphorical text and provides further insight into the poet's life, allowing us to

26 Livrea 1968a, 64; Tissoni 2000a, 177.

27 *Monobiblos* dedicated "to the pupils of the great Proclus".

28 The ekphrasis of the statues of the gymnasium of Zeuxippos (503), a work commissioned by the emperor, contains references to Neoplatonism; Tissoni 2000a, 37–44.

29 Here I follow the chronology of the works proposed by Tissoni 2000a, 20–3, who argues against Cameron's dating of the ekphrasis to AD 500 on the basis of comparison with the panegyrics of Anastasius by Procopius of Gaza and Priscian of Caesarea.

30 See Hernández de la Fuente 2014 for a new reading of Nonnus' poetics from a Neoplatonic perspective.

31 Giomi 2003, 371–2.

32 Claudian's affinity with the circle of the Neoplatonic Christian philosopher M. Theodorus is discussed by Giomi 2003 and Tarigo 2012.

better contextualise Colluthus as a poet working at Anastasius' court. Further research on this aspect may bring to light new philosophical readings of the *Abduction*.

The elements that have here been pieced together—Colluthus' activity under the patronage of Anastasius, his affiliation with other poets working in a shared cultural environment (that was also self-sufficient in terms of reception), and his allusions to Neoplatonism—paint a rather different picture from the traditional image of Colluthus as an isolated, unoriginal Nonnian scholar who composed a heterogeneous cento-like epyllion. The new Colluthus emerges as a professional poet whose activity was closely connected with that of his contemporaries, and who paid homage to epic tradition as much as to contemporary propagandistic poetry and Neoplatonic theories such as those of Christodorus.

What is Colluthus' approach towards previous literary tradition? The poet plays with different genres in various scenes of his epyllion: beside a bucolic proem lies an epic description of Eris' rage, followed by an *agon* and an invective delivered by Aphrodite. Colluthus also engages with other subgenres, such as ekphrasis of architecture and artworks. During Paris' journey the poet inserts a brief ekphrasis of the buildings of Sparta. He also portrays his Aphrodite as fully armed, modelling her on Claudian's Venus in the *Gigantomachy* but also on the Amiklaion Aphrodite, a statue of the armed goddess often mentioned by Nonnus. The elaborate hairstyles of the goddess and of Paris may also have been borrowed from the figurative arts. This specific type of ekphrasis was rather in fashion at Colluthus' time: often ekphraseis of public buildings or artworks that had been built or restored by the emperor were commissioned as instruments of propaganda. For instance, this is the case of Procopius of Caesarea's *de Aedificiis*, Paul the Silentiary's *Ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia* and *Ekprasis of the Ambo of Hagia Sophia* (all of which celebrate Justinian), and the description of the cosmos painted in the baths of Gaza by John of Gaza.[33] By embracing this popular subgenre,[34] Colluthus demonstrates once again that he is very much a poet of the late fifth century, as opposed to a colourless follower of a long-past classical tradition. His epyllion does not contain an encomium of Anastasius, however; thus the poet briefly touches upon the genre and incorporates it in the geographical ekphrasis of Paris' journey, almost as if simply to evoke a theme familiar to contemporary readers. The panegyrical

33 Lauritzen 2011, 72; Renaut 2005, 207.

34 Colluthus touches upon other genres too, such as πάτρια, for instance, when he refers to the myth of Hyacinth of Amyclae.

objective of late antique architectural ekphraseis is not present here, but Colluthus exploits the genre to make his epyllion more current and relevant.

This renegotiation of genre,[35] in which the traditional genre is given a twist by the poet, is a feature of late antique poetry, which aimed at recovering the most genuine classicising tradition, while seeking to revolutionise the canons, the fruition and the objectives of genres.[36] This is a constant feature of Colluthus' poetics that we can deduce from the analysis of his models. One device used by the poet is to make specific linguistic choices in order to evoke a series of associations that foreshadow what is yet to happen, driving the reader to expect a certain outcome. We can see how Colluthus achieves this in the proem, for instance, where the invocation of the Trojan Nymphs creates in his narratees expectations[37] of a programmatic nature with regard to his poetics (association of Nymphs with water, of water with poetry), of an aetiological nature (subject of the poem—Helen—the cause of the Trojan War) and of the tragic outcome of the story, in the form of omens (the Trojan Nymphs as the daughters of the river Xanthus are traditionally mourning for Troy,[38] and Xanthus, son of Zeus, who fought Achilles to defend Troy).[39] Moreover, the lamentation evoked by the daughters of Xanthus creates a bridge connecting the bucolic world to its threnodic origin (as in Thyrsis' lament song for Daphnis),[40] and we have also seen that mourning and pastoral themes are also often associated in Nonnus, as in Nature's mourning for the death of Hymnus in *Dion.* 15.

Similar considerations apply to the description of Paris, where Colluthus plays with various words (such as μῆλον[41] and ταῦρος)[42] to create expectations of a standard pastoral portrait, but then surprises his readers by using tradition to achieve an unexpected outcome. For instance, this is the case of the beauty criteria that Zeus establishes for Paris; however, instead of judging the face of the three goddesses, Paris focusses his attention on necks and feet (134–6), and in the end he chooses breasts (130–6). Colluthus blends here allusions to

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35 I borrow this definition from Prauscello 2008.

36 Tarigo 2012, 2 and Agosti 2006a.

37 This theory finds consensus in recent scholarship: Paschalis 2008, 138; Magnelli 2008, 162–4; Prauscello 2008, 174 and 185.

38 Quint. Sm. 12.459 and 11.245.

39 *Il.* 21.308–14.

40 Prauscello 2008, 176.

41 Paschalis 2008, 146 explains the associations evoked by "sheep", "flock", and "breast".

42 Prauscello 2008, 184 explains the apparent discrepancy of Paris tending mixed flocks with the double meaning of the word for bull, which also refers to the phallus and sexual power.

three divine epiphanies from the Homeric tradition: Athena with her flashing eyes in *Il.* 1.200–206, Aphrodite as she appears to Helen in *Il.* 3.396–7 and also as she appears to Anchises in *h.Aphr.* 88–9. These allusions, which are easily detectable by an educated reader, can be interpreted as hints deliberately placed by the poet to make readers guess that the beauty contest will end with the crowning of Aphrodite as the winner. Colluthus' further reference to Homer (*Il.* 13.66–71, where the two Ajaxes are at a loss as for the exact identity of the divinity to whom they have been speaking) may be an allusion to the challenges involved in identifying a god: in fact, Helen experiences this very difficulty when she seeks to recognise a god in Paris at 260–66, and the poet may thus be suggesting to his readers to question the identity of the goddess whom Paris has been looking at. By decoding the intertextual references to the Homeric passages included in the description of Paris' visual behaviour, readers are led to re-create in their imagination images of Athena and then Aphrodite, who is evoked through the reference to her necklaces from *h.Aphr.* The intertextual allusion is thus employed here by Colluthus to actually add emphasis to the goddess' naked chest, prompting the readers to guess who the winner will be.

As well noted by Prauscello,[43] Colluthus employs not only bucolic and Homeric tradition but also the relevant exegesis and traditions of reception as a tool for orienting readers' expectations and shaping his narrative strategies. It is reasonable to conclude that the poet not only assumes that his narratees share the same knowledge, but that he actually expects this, as otherwise, it would not be possible to fully receive and enjoy his poetry. A similar perspective is that of Callimachus, whose narratees are expected to interact and employ their knowledge to complete the picture that the poet is providing.[44] Colluthus' interest in an aetiology contributes to such a conclusion: where Paris is oblivious to the multiple omens that are placed along his journey by the narrator, readers cannot ignore them, and their expectations are clearly driven by the poet to view Paris as a future sexual predator and Helen as the one responsible for the disaster at home and for many at Troy.

Narratees' knowledge is demanded and relied upon by Colluthus to decipher allusions as signs that need to be decoded: when a gadfly or a man with a goat's skin appears in the story, readers are immediately bombarded with a series of previous occurrences that are recalled to mind and build the first level of his allusive associations, so that readers instantly recognise the genre

43 Prauscello 2008, 185.

44 Harder 2012, 49–51, and 2004.

in which he wishes to place his scene (for instance, a pastoral context). Then, when readers feel familiar with the bucolic picture, and are comfortable with this genre, suddenly Colluthus produces his twist, jarring his readers and achieving his actual goal, i.e. an ironic playing with tradition. Then, allusion is not the goal of Colluthus' poetics,[45] but an instrument aimed at leading readers' expectations in a certain direction, only to undercut those expectations with an ironic surprise.

The voyeurism which was typical of late antiquity is not only apparent from Colluthus' taste for ekphrasis of buildings as mentioned earlier, but also from the numerous other occasions in which a picturesque description is presented to the reader. From characters' gestures to the visual behaviour in Helen and Paris' meeting scene, our poet demonstrates his interest in the visual in many aspects. Chapter 3 surveyed and assessed the precision of Colluthus' choices in terms of visual terminology, a pattern that is aligned with that of his main models, Homer, Apollonius and Nonnus. The case-studies of Paris' journey to Sparta and his meeting with Helen show how visual and emotional worlds interact and how emotions are communicated to the reader by means of outer appearance and visual language. Paris and Helen's erotic involvement is not mutual, but instead the gaze travels only from Helen towards Paris: the one-directionality of such a dynamic implies gender-related considerations which lead us to conclude that for Colluthus too, as in the novel and epigram before him, the object of the gaze is no longer only the female body, but can also be that of a man (who, paradoxically, does not respond), and that Nonnus' ideals of male beauty (that of Cadmus), reflected by Paris, can coincide with a very feminised appearance which does not impact masculinity nor effectiveness of seduction.

The visuality of Colluthus' epyllion is clearly more than just an aesthetic choice: our poet was evidently influenced by public speaking (progymnasmata–ethopoiia in particular—and *agon*) and by contemporary forms of performance. Late antique poetry, especially in the East and Egypt, from the third century AD, is characterised by a clear return to a more pragmatic and performance-oriented dimension,[46] which implies a close relationship with its

45 Giangrande 1969, 152 supported this thesis linking Colluthus' irony directly (and only) to Hellenistic literature, but was thoroughly criticised by Livrea 1991. Setting aside the polemic, I have selected the useful elements from each scholar's argument in order to understand what Colluthus' ultimate goal may have been by reading allusion as a literary technique rather than an objective.

46 Agosti 2006a and 2008.

audience. Poetry is composed for recipients not only on the occasion of private readings in élite literary circles, but also public readings *coram populo*. Aside from Claudian's *Gigantomachy*, another good example is the *Description of the known world* by Dionysius of Alexandria, which was performed before the Alexandrine audience.[47] The festivals of the Brytae, Maiuma, and of Chemmis in Panopolis all included poetic *agones*[48] (in which tradition was both emulated and challenged, in a two-level competition which involved the predecessors as much as the contemporary rivals) as well as pantomimic performances and musical contests at least from 250 AD.[49] Nonnus may have had some exposure to these festivals, as he displays a thorough knowledge of pantomime in *Dionysiaca* 9, where he describes the dances of Maron and Silenus. However, after Constantine's era these public festivals disappeared, leaving a legacy of only certain features in other forms of art and performance.[50]

Similarly, in Colluthus characters are described in their interaction among themselves, and their inner emotions are revealed through their visual behaviour. In this way, the narrator drives readers' expectations in one way or the other, promoting interaction also between them and the characters. This process is not simply finalised to enhance the pathos and the drama of the scene, but reveals the poet's intentions to create a poem that reflects a performance such as a pantomime. It is not possible to ascertain whether Colluthus' text was used as a pantomime libretto (as happened to other texts), but the compatibility of the *Abduction* with this genre and the features it shares with it can hardly be questioned, leading us to conclude that the poet's aim was in fact to write a text that was to be received and enjoyed as a pantomime.

We are pointed in the same direction by the study of Colluthus' narrative style. The poet follows in the footsteps of the traditional epic models but also carefully imitates later ones. In particular, he exploits narrative techniques used by authors of epyllia of similar subject (Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina* and *Gigantomachy* in the fourth century AD and *Hero and Leander* by Musaeus, a contemporary of Colluthus) at key points in his narrative. For instance, the abandoned victims' tragedy is presented strictly through direct

47 This is convincingly argued in Amato 2005a, 322. See also Agosti 2005a, 37 n. 16 and Lightfoot 2014.

48 Not only epic works were publicly recited, but, as we have seen, also panegyrics and ekphraseis, like Paul the Silentiary's poem on Hagia Sophia, see Tarigo 2012, 2.

49 These games, which are also mentioned by Her. 2.91, initially included only athletic competitions; see Gonnelli 2003, 320–1.

50 Miguélez-Cavero 2008, 258–60.

speech (Hermione, Proserpina); the poet addresses some of the characters for enhanced pathos (Colluthus: Phyllis and Dionysus; Musaeus: Leander). The presence of narratees is implicitly acknowledged through references to primary sources, and their participation is also required for the epyllion to be received appropriately.

In other poets, the choice of these narrative techniques served the purpose of aligning their work with a previous model (Apollonius' *Argonautica* with the *Hymn to Apollo* for instance). In the *Abduction*, the poet achieves a twofold objective: firstly, as in his address to Dionysus, he breaks the fiction, revealing his role as a narrator and disclosing his craft by engaging in a conversation with a god, thus demanding a place in the contemporary literary world. Secondly, he creates a fiction of a performance through a text written as if it were a play. Readers can also be spectators, and while reading or listening to his poem they can also watch it as a pantomime. Thus, characters often speak to readers and to other characters through visual language, making their thoughts clear so that on no occasion are readers unaware of their feelings.

The illusion is built and maintained through a series of narrative artifices that make the story more scenic, such as Helen's apparition in Hermione's dream, Paris' judgement of the goddesses and Aphrodite's public display of her breasts. Some of these scenic details are of course part of the story, but Colluthus puts his mark on them by choosing each time the version of the myth with the most pictorial potential. For instance, the waterspout does not appear in any other version of the story;[51] Colluthus invents this feature (perhaps modelling it on that which drowns Leander in Musaeus) and elevates it to an omen, which of course goes unnoticed by Paris and his crew. Following this logic, the goddesses being judged in the nude in some sources[52] may seem as a missed opportunity; on the contrary, Colluthus chooses the version in which the goddesses are dressed, and only afterwards does Aphrodite unexpectedly undress, providing the graphic entertainment greatly exploited by the poet.

To gain a more precise characterisation of the poet, this work has examined the cultural environment in which Colluthus was active. By using evidence from the works of his contemporaries and their cultural surroundings, a new reading of his poetry has been suggested from a new perspective which necessarily takes into consideration patronage literature and features of his current literary taste, such as the strong interest in the visual. This insight leads to a

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51 As discussed in Chapter 3, other sources speak of favourable winds or of storms but in different circumstances.

52 Ov. *Her.* 16.115 and Luc. *Dear. Iud.* 10.

new interpretation of Colluthus as a mature poet who shows awareness of, and confidence in, his poetics, and who is not afraid to engage with his audience to communicate his relationship with his models and his expectations in terms of reputation. Many aspects of Colluthus' poetics, such as his irony, still require further research and may lead to new insights into his work. It still remains to be clarified how this epyllion relates to the rest of Colluthus' literary production: was it a work of leisure, unrelated to patronage relationships, or did it fulfil other unknown objectives?

In the past, Colluthus was blamed for failing to meet the expectations he had created by setting the scene within a certain genre, but this work has suggested that he may have intended to surprise his readers precisely with such twists. Reading the *Abduction* from this perspective involves reinterpreting what was previously seen as the disappointing anticlimaxes to each scene as the ironic twists that the poet intended for learned readers. Interaction between narrator and educated narratees has in fact been an established feature of erudite poetry since Hellenistic times, thus irony may then be the key to fully appreciating Colluthus' ability to surprise us as readers by innovating and playing with genres.

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